THE

MODERN CHURCHMAN

By identifying the new learning with heresy, you make orthodoxy synonymous with ignorance.—*Erasmus.*

A State without the means of change is without the means of its conservation.—*Edmund Burke.*

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Bishop Rawlinson's Verdict on the Doctrinal Report.

In Dr. Rawlinson, the Bishop of Derby, the Church possesses a scholar-bishop, and the English episcopal bench is in grievous need of such bishops to-day. For without a large proportion of such bishops in the Upper Houses of the Convocations we shall invariably get the wrong solutions of our doctrinal problems—solutions in which ignorance will combine with timidity and issue in intolerance. Although many wish to ignore its existence or to run away from it, it cannot be stressed too often that there is a doctrinal problem with us to-day. It has been with us for many years, and it will remain with us until it is solved both theoretically and practically. The recent Doctrinal Report indicates the way in which the problem can and must be solved. The Church authorities must be satisfied to demand no more to-day than faith in the essential Christian verities. The Church must be satisfied to permit great variety in the teaching of those essentials, and, in the case of non-essential elements in the essentials, the Church must permit the holding of numerous alternatives.

Dr. Rawlinson has done great service by stressing in the April *Church Assembly News* certain important implications of the Doctrinal Report. Much in that Report is not liked by our

more traditionalist fellow-Churchmen, and as a consequence they suggest that the Report itself is of no real significance—the lucubrations of a small group of ecclesiastical theorists. Erudite these theorists may be, but little do they understand the valuelessness of their conclusions and speculations when set beside the massive and immutable dogmatic formulations of Catholic theology. The contents of the Doctrinal Report may therefore be ignored practically. This attitude of cool contempt would satisfy many of the traditionalist opponents of the Report. There are others, however, who will be satisfied with nothing less than its specific condemnation and official rejection by the English Church. Dr. Rawlinson indicates that neither of these attitudes is possible. It is as impossible to ignore the Report as it is to condemn it officially. For good or ill it has come to stay and to exert an important influence on our English theology. Dr. Rawlinson writes in the article to which we have referred :

> 'The resulting document, whatever its formal status (whether at the present time or hereafter), is one which it would be quite impossible for either the Church of England or the Anglican Communion to repudiate in practice ; and it must be expected to bear its chief fruit in the next generation.
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> The Report constitutes, upon any theory of it, an historic landmark in the story of Anglicanism. It must inevitably come to be used as a text-book in theological teaching ; and its method of approach, undercutting all the traditional lines of partisan cleavage, must be expected to operate powerfully in the direction of unity. It is a document which can hardly fail to promote not only mutual understanding, but actual synthesis, as between the various traditional "schools" of theological thought in the Anglican Church' (p. 85).

For those who are Modernists, Dr. Rawlinson provides in a single sentence the best description we have yet encountered of the essential character of this variously estimated document :

> *'Taking the Report as a whole, I cannot personally understand how any intelligent reader can fail to regard its main outcome as constituting an impressive re-affirmation, upon the basis of complete intellectual freedom, of the substance of Christian orthodoxy.'*

Such a description ought to go far to secure the sympathetic reception of the Report by Anglo-Catholics. It seems, however, to have failed to do so if we are to take the judgment of the *Church Times* as authoritative for Anglo-Catholicism. In its leading article of April 22, Dr. Rawlinson is severely censured for his educational and reconciling statement in the official organ of the Church Assembly. According to the *Church Times*

'One of the distinguishing characteristics of the English episcopate —as of some other makers of *pronunciamentos*—is that they seldom reflect, before they rush into print, on the public effect of their action. In this respect, if in no other, Dr. Rawlinson is altogether Anglican.'

'His article would possibly have been better unwritten. It certainly ought not to have been published in the guileless official organ of the Church Assembly.'

It is perhaps possible that the editorial authority of that guileless organ really knows its own business and the official mind of the Church of England better even than does the *Church Times*.

'THREATENED DISINTEGRATION OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.'

The following document presenting the objections of the reactionary wing of the Anglo-Catholic School to the Doctrinal Report has just been issued. It is signed by representatives of the following societies: the Church Union, the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament, the Federation of Catholic Priests, the Society of the Holy Cross, the Guild of All Souls, the Catholic League, the Society for Promoting Catholic Unity, the Society for Catholic Reunion, the Society of Mary, and endorsed by the Superiors of the monastic communities of Cowley, Mirfield, Kelham and Nashdom.

'The Council deplores the publication of the Report of the Doctrinal Commission before any known consideration of it by the Bishops, such as was contemplated in the terms of reference laid down by Archbishop Davidson. This has increased the serious unsettlement already existing in the Church of England owing to the violations more and more frequent of those principles of faith, order and morals which are the sacred inheritance of the whole Anglican Communion, and the tokens of its continuity of life within the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.

It is therefore imperative to reassert those principles as they are presented in the Anglican formularies.

The Church of England, in the Book of Common Prayer, the Ordinal and the Thirty-nine Articles, has expressly adhered to the Faith and Order of the Catholic Church, and in matters of controversy has ever appealed to the teaching and practice of the undivided Church.

It is on this principle that Anglicans give their allegiance to the Church of England. They cannot therefore recognize any claim on their loyalty which conflicts with that which they owe to the Catholic Church of which the English Church is part.

(A) FAITH.

1. The Church of England recites the Creeds in that sense in which they have been interpreted by the universal consent of the Church; and particularly in the Second and Fourth of the Thirty-nine Articles, and in its liturgical forms of worship, deliberately expresses belief in the

Virginal Conception and Birth of our Lord and in the Resurrection of His Body from the tomb.

Consequently, to recite the formularies of the Church while publicly denying their historical truth, dishonours the worship of Almighty God, grievously hinders the spiritual and evangelistic power of the Church, and must compromise the trustworthiness of its ministers in the eyes of the whole world.

2. The Church of England has ever professed a profound reverence for the Bible as the written Word of God, divinely inspired and authoritatively recognized as such by the Church. The current easy rejection by some accredited teachers of plain testimonies of Holy Scripture—*e.g.* to the occurrence of miracle, the existence of an order of spiritual beings, both good and evil, and the eternal punishment of the finally impenitent—is clearly inconsistent with that scriptural and historical Christianity to which the Church of England is irrevocably committed.

3. The Church of England, by requiring all priests at their ordination to promise that they will be "ready with all faithful diligence to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God's Word," and by requiring all Bishops to renew this vow at their consecration, and by appointing that the Creeds of the Church should be recited at public worship and before baptism, and by praying in the Litany for deliverance from "all false doctrine, heresy and schism," has made it plain that those appointed to be teachers are given no liberty to depart from the doctrinal standards set forth in the Book of Common Prayer.

(B) ORDER.

4. The admission to Holy Communion of those who, by the fact of their adhering to dissenting bodies, repudiate, at least implicitly, the faith of the Church; who are not "ready and desirous to be confirmed"; or about whose baptism there is reasonable doubt, is contrary to the express regulations of the Church of England, as well as a grave infringement of primitive order.

5. The Church of England, by strict adherence to Catholic requirements in the consecration of Bishops, by the declaration made in the Preface to the Ordinal, and by its practice of ordaining ministers of non-episcopal bodies, whilst accepting without re-ordination those duly ordained by a Catholic bishop, has shown its intention "to continue and reverently use and esteem" the Apostolic ministry of the Church.

In consistency with these principles the Church of England can neither recognize non-episcopal ministries as equal in status or validity to its own, nor allow those under its jurisdiction to make use of such ministries for the reception of the Sacraments.

Further, no local Church can in consistency with the same principles admit to Holy Orders under any conditions whatever those who, by the universal judgment of the Church, are debarred therefrom by reason of their sex.

(C) MORALS.

6. In the marriage service the Church of England teaches that matrimony is a holy and honourable estate, that it is not to be taken in hand unadvisedly or lightly, that it has a deep spiritual interpretation, "signifying the mystical union that is betwixt Christ and His Church"; and, moreover, requires those who marry to pledge themselves to the strict interpretation of our Lord's teaching about the indissolubility of marriage. Hence the policy adopted by many of our Bishops in their

dealings with divorced persons who have "re-married" during the lifetime of their former partners, and in their toleration of the use of contraceptives, is untrue to this standard, derogatory to the dignity of marriage, and endangers the sanctity of Christian family life.

These are not the only points in which the standards of the Church of England in Faith, Order and Morals have recently been compromised by some in authority, but they are among the most disconcerting. It is in no spirit of panic nor in any confusion of thought as to the particular significance of the Doctrinal Report that this statement is issued. The authorized formularies of the Church of England remain intact; but the Report itself witnesses to the serious errors prevalent among us, and bears unconscious testimony to the gravity of the present situation by the complacency with which it regards them. Where this attitude is shared by those who are in positions of high authority and responsibility, complacency verges upon complicity. Further, the Report reflects the present trend of opinon by its general lack of reference to the authority and judgment of the Church as a whole, and by its constant appeal to speculative thought rather than to revelation as the criterion in matters of faith. In close alliance with this neglect of Catholic authority in doctrine stand the proposals for union in India and elsewhere, to which so many Bishops are giving public support; and the regulations concerning Deaconesses, which have obtained the approval of the Upper Houses of the two Convocations. These things, together with such accomplished facts as the open Communion service recently held at Oxford, show how serious the departure is from the teaching and practice of the Church of England as authorized in her formularies.

Our gravest concern is with the liberty claimed by some accredited teachers to treat as open questions articles of faith universally received by the Church, a liberty carried to such a degree of licence as to amount in certain cases to a virtual denial of the Godhead of our Lord.

These innovations, standing as they do in clear opposition both to fundamental principles of Faith, Order and Morals of the whole Church, and also to the formularies and established practice of the Anglican Communion, are creating a situation of increasing strain. If the doctrinal standards of the Church of England and its established order in regard to the ministry continue to be set aside, the Bishops will eventually force upon many loyal and devoted churchmen a most painful conflict between their attachment to the Church of England and the allegiance they owe to that one, holy, Catholic and apostolic Church in which they daily profess their belief.

The Council is determined to resist to the utmost this threatened disintegration of the Church of England. It therefore calls upon all faithful Churchmen for constant prayer and vigorous support for its efforts towards the maintenance of the integrity of those Catholic principles which are now more seriously endangered than at any time in the last three centuries. On faithfulness to these principles depends the cohesion of the Anglican Communion, the spiritual welfare of Christ's flock, and any hope of a permanent contribution on the part of the Church of England to a reunited Christendom.'

Whether this document has much support behind it, or little —and we find opinion curiously divided on this point even in what may be regarded as well-informed circles— is of little sig-

nificance compared with the profounder problem as to whether the Church of England can possibly adopt the position or pursue the policy laid down in this document without signing her own death warrant. Our Traditionalists seem here to be making one final effort to secure the renunciation by the English Church of all those developing principles and policies which have made her significant since the Reformation, and have given her, we say it with all seriousness, the potential leadership of Christendom. What the British Commonwealth is in the world to-day in the sphere of political and social ideals and methods, it is within the power of the English Church to become in modern Christendom — a force within the Christian world which values the Spirit of Christ in the form of love, freedom and truth above all else. For this indeed we are coming to realize, to cite Bishop Ken's phrase, is the true 'doctrine of the Cross as it stands distinguished from all papal corruptions and puritan innovations.' It is this ideal which has been caught and reflected in a most remarkable manner in the Doctrinal Report, and gives to it its supreme value. The pronouncements of the Report on the pros and cons of various dogmatic and institutional issues are of quite secondary importance in comparison. It is on this issue that we recognize with deep regret the gulf which separates the tone and temper of the Catholic Advisory Council from the spirit of the Doctrinal Report. The latter breathes the spirit of a comprehensive, free, tolerant, forward-glancing, truth-seeking Christian Catholicism; the former stands for that type of Catholicism which, whatever its uses in the past, has we believe no value for the future. This rigid, dogmatic, uninspired and uninspiring Catholicism may survive for many ages. It probably will survive under the diminishing sway of the Papacy — although we do not despair even of the Papacy itself, taught by bitter experience, yet learning (several centuries after ourselves) those lessons which the spirit of freedom, truth and love would teach humanity.

The Church of England has for some years past been slowly but surely approaching those cross-roads where a definitive decision between these two types of Catholicism has to be made. All serious students of the English Church know quite well which road her constitution, history and responsibilities require her to

take. It is here, in the sphere of historic insight and appreciation of the true character and real significance of the Church of England, that we find the statement by the Catholic Advisory Council to be so woefully misleading. The Church of England which the Catholic Advisory Council visualizes never has existed in England since the Reformation and certainly never will exist. It exists only in the minds of those Anglo-Catholic idealists whose eyes and hearts are set on reunion with Rome at the cost of the sacrifice of everything which led the Christian people of England to liberate the Church from Papal tyranny and purge it from mediaeval corruptions and superstitions.

The statement by the Catholic Advisory Council professes to stand by the Church of England as represented by the Prayer Book, Articles and Ordinal. But this is not the Church of England which those who have drawn up this statement really have in mind. The Church of England of the Prayer Book, Articles and Ordinal constituted a National Communion within the Catholic Church, but a Catholic Church liberated from Papal tyranny, purged from mediaeval corruptions in faith, practice and worship: a Catholic Church loyal to the Christian faith as interpreted in the light of the supreme spiritual and moral authority of Holy Scripture: a Catholic Church conscious of the fallibility of General Councils in faith and morals: a Catholic Church acknowledging the supremacy of the English Sovereign in all causes, ecclesiastical as well as civil, within his realm: a Catholic Church claiming freedom for all national Churches (while adhering to the essentials of the Christian faith) to determine their own order and customs in accordance with their needs. This in broad outline is the Catholic Church of the Book of Common Prayer, the Thirty-nine Articles and the Ordinal.

To sum up our indictment: the statement issued by the Catholic Advisory Council stands condemned on two main counts. (1) That it is opposed to the supreme valuation of the spirit of love, freedom and truth as the essential Christian thing and as that which must be preserved in and by the Christian Church if it is to do its work in the modern world effectively. (2) That it is historically unsound in its understanding and presentation of the true character and significance of the Church of England.

If the Church of England is, as this document asserts, threatened with distintegration by its production of and adhesion to the Doctrinal Report, then we are convinced, and we may hope our Church authorities are convinced also, that disintegration of the Church, although deplorable, would be an infinitely lesser evil than that she should 'through cowardice make the great refusal' and turn her back upon the policy of love, freedom and truth which the Doctrinal Report offers to her.

Burial Reform and Funeral Costs.

According to Jewish tradition, Moses was buried by the angels and no man knoweth his sepulchre unto this day.

It is one of the injustices of human life that when each of us has done with his body, not we but our relations or our community are compelled to dispose of it. This is becoming an increasingly expensive obligation in modern communities, and often a most serious burden to those who are least able to bear it. In greater London one corpse out of every eleven is buried in a pauper's grave and at the expense of the Public Assistance Committee; but the poorer people are, the more they seem to shrink from this method of disposing of their dead. Yet incredible as it may seem, there are in existence in this country to-day some eighty million (paying) policies providing for the expenses of funerals. The premiums, collected at frequent intervals from door to door, reach an annual total of sixty-six million pounds. This problem of burial costs in modern England is fully treated in a recently published volume, *Burial Reform and Funeral Costs*, by Sir Arnold Wilson and Professor Hermann Levy.[1]

It is only as we study the problem of reducing the costs of burials that we come to realize how very complicated it is. Personal sentiment, social prestige, commercial greed, the rising cost of land in the vicinity of our great modern centres of population, each contributes its factor of difficulty in the achievement of reform. Our authors' proposals, based upon knowledge derived from a very wide field of research, are as follows:

> 'We have . . . suggested that cemetery superintendents should be authorized to act as burial contractors — undertaking to arrange for funerals by entering into arrangements with undertakers according to

[1] Oxford University Press, 12/6; 1938.

itemized contracts at varying prices, the actual arrangements being made, under contract with the cemetery superintendent on behalf of the local burial authority, with established firms of undertakers. We feel that the interposition of an intermediary in such matters, as in France, would be of very great advantage to the public. Under such a system anyone to whom it fell to arrange for a funeral in any public cemetery could consult the superintendent, who would let him know exactly what the applicant would have to pay under the various scales, but would, himself, have no financial interest in the transaction.'

So far as English country parishes are concerned there is little need for reform. The burial fees for parishioners are very moderate, and country undertakers are willing to provide plain coffins if only the relations of the dead could be persuaded to order them. We wish that the carrying of the body to the churchyard on a waggon, if the distance be far, or on a hand-bier if it be near, could become general. We wish that our Church authorities would insist that every parish should provide a funeral pall (purple or black) for covering the coffin during the funeral ceremonies. This would preclude the distinction between polished oak and plain deal being obtruded on the notice of the mourners. We are glad to note, and it is a real sign of social progress, that our authors have no criticism to offer to-day as to the manner in which pauper funerals are conducted.

> 'Rattle his bones over the stones,
> For he's only a pauper that nobody owns'

reflects a spirit which happily belongs to the past.

From the point of view of the influence of traditional doctrine on modern Christian thought and feeling it is interesting to observe that the primitive Christian belief in the imminence of the *Parousia* does not preclude Sir Arnold Wilson from urging our authorities to take long views, especially in making provision for adequate cemeteries.

A Liturgical Venture of Faith.

On Maundy Thursday evening, following the practice initiated last year at Harborne Parish Church, the Vicar, Canon R. D. Richardson, celebrated an interdenominational service of Holy Communion. He was assisted by a Methodist minister, who read the Gospel, and by a woman officer of the Salvation Army, who preached the sermon. There were some two hundred communicants. The form of service used was not that prescribed

in our Prayer Book, but a special composition[1] which followed the order of our English liturgy but was characterized by many additions, omissions and alterations. The underlying idea of this service is modernization, particularly by the elimination of any commemoration of expiatory sacrifice. The ancient precedent for this omission is derived from the Eucharistic prayers preserved in the *Didaché*, of which we hear echoes in the post-Communion thanksgiving in this service, which thank God for the gifts of 'knowledge, faith and immortality which Thou hast made known to us through Jesus Christ' but make no reference to His propitiatory sacrifice. The fact that the *Didaché* cites only St. Matthew's Gospel indicates that it belongs to that early period when each Christian Church possessed only a single gospel. We might have expected that Gospel to have been St. Luke's, since the Third Evangelist gives indications that he is opposed to the interpretation of Christ's death as an expiation.

We observe with regret a tendency to censure Canon Richardson for his venture of faith. Such censure is a great mistake. What we need most to-day in the Church of England is steady loyalty to the essentials of its doctrine, worship and practice as laid down in our Prayer Book and Articles. But we also need judicious and reverent experiments in public worship, together with the steady policy of furthering interdenominational Christian fellowship whenever the opportunity offers itself. In the ordinary services of Harborne Parish Church the parishioners enjoy, and show that they enjoy, those forms of worship which they are accustomed to as English Churchmen. The Maundy Thursday Evening Eucharist was not one of the regular parochial services, but was locally recognized as a venture in the spheres of interdenominational fellowship and liturgical experiment.

Theological Liberalism and Ecclesiastical Promotion.

Mitis sapientia and *sancta simplicitas* are not the same thing, although in pious circles *sancta simplicitas* is often identified with *mitis sapientia*. But *mitis sapientia* is sanctified common sense, whereas *sancta simplicitas* is the survival in a Christian garb of that primitive donkey in man which Bishop Creighton

[1] To be obtained from the printers, The Bradshaw Printing Co. (Harborne) Ltd., 146 High Street, Harborne, Birmingham, 17. Price 3*d*.

declared he found to be a more formidable obstacle to truth seeking and right doing than either the primitive ape or the primitive tiger.

The Master of the Temple's recent volume *Looking Forward*[1] is a precious product of *mitis sapientia*. Harold Anson is a true clerk of Oxenford—

> 'Sounding in moral virtue was his speech,
> And gladly would he learn, and gladly teach.'

Elsewhere in this issue we publish a review of his delightful and arresting autobiography. Here we only desire to call attention to an incident related in it which has a not unimportant bearing upon our system of Church patronage and upon many recent endeavours, direct and indirect, to alter that system. Broad Churchmen, or Liberals, or Modernists as they are usually called to-day, have been most anxious that whilst flagrant abuses in our existing system of Church patronage should be reformed, and that the parochial laity should possess the right to exercise a veto in the case of a manifestly unsuitable nominee to their parish, yet the present system or systems of patronage —there are some nine of them—should be maintained: especially what are known as Crown patronage and private patronage. Our present system of patronage is no small factor, indirectly, in maintaining the comprehensiveness of the English Church and the progressive quality of her teaching. It requires no very critical eye to observe that for some years past many-sided and persistent efforts have been made to undermine our present methods of Church patronage in the interests of what are called 'spiritual freedom' and the 'inherent rights of the episcopate.' We doubt if to-day the 'advance of secularism' and the 'growth of materialism' among English people are half as dangerous to the influence of the Church in our community as is the notable increase in the claims of bureaucratic officialdom and episcopal absolutism. These tendencies should certainly be checked where they seek to undermine or overthrow our present systems of Church patronage.

Many distinguished clergymen who would otherwise have remained in ecclesiastical obscurity have been appointed to eminent positions by the Crown. Although Archbishop Davidson

[1] *Looking Forward.* By Harold Anson. (Heinemann; 10/6. 1938.)

claimed that he was always consulted about the more important Church appointments, this does not necessarily mean that his advice was always taken. The following incident recorded by Canon Anson in his autobiography would lead us to hope that on some occasions at least the Primate's advice was ignored :

> 'Soon after the appearance of *Concerning Prayer,* Archbishop Davidson invited me to stay with him at Lambeth. He was somewhat concerned about my article "Prayer as Understanding," and said that my criticism of one or two of the Prayer-book prayers was really a criticism of the whole Prayer-book outlook. My criticism had been that there was a tendency to ask God to put away His wrath, to alter His mind, to consent, in view of our prayers, to avert His punishments, and condescend to receive us with favour; in short, that we approach Him rather as an oriental Sultan than as sons should approach a Father on whose character and justice we could unhesitatingly rely.
>
> Archbishop Davidson was most kind to me, but said that my teaching would prevent him from offering me any responsible position in the Church . . .' (pp. 201, 202).

We may note that the Mastership of the Temple is a Crown appointment and Canon Anson was appointed only after Davidson's resignation.

Then and Now, 1921 and 1938.

We have felt on various occasions in the past, and that past not very far distant, that it was our duty to criticize the policy and views advocated by the *Church Times.* We are glad to observe that in its issue of April 29th, the *Church Times* has published an article on the Doctrinal Report which, if it really represents the convictions of the Editor, or editorial board, must fill all English Modernists with hope that a really liberal and progressive Catholicism is going to replace a Catholicism which certainly has had as little right to claim to be called Liberal as it has had to be called Catholic. The article to which we refer is contributed by Canon Peter Green, and deals with 'The right approach to the Report' under four heads.

First, that the Report does not lay down what is the faith of the Church of England, but what are the actual beliefs at the present time of important classes of Churchmen and to what extent such views may seem to be permissible.

Secondly, that Church doctrine is not static and has never been completely formulated, 'a thing, so to speak, dead and embalmed.' Furthermore there has never been complete agree-

ment, even among the orthodox, as to the precise way in which certain doctrines should be understood and presented.

> 'The Church historian, who does not let his eyes roam for a moment outside the boundaries of the Catholic Church, will find, all down the centuries, profound differences in matters of doctrine.'

And these differences are to be welcomed because it is only by their interaction that truth can be kept 'alive and healthy.'

Thirdly, besides the official view of the Church in matters of doctrine there has always been, although this is not recognized except by discerning students of the Church's thought, an unofficial view on many doctrinal issues of extreme importance.

Fourthly, that though modern Christians may believe in the historic facts related in the New Testament, their interpretation of those facts must, owing to the advance in knowledge and changed conceptions of the nature of the Universe, differ, in some cases very strikingly, from the views of primitive Christians. Canon Green cites, as an example of this, the changed view of the Ascension.

Under the third of his headings it is of no ordinary interest to English Modernists to have one of their leaders, to whom they owe a great debt for his wisdom, erudition and courage, the late Hastings Rashdall, referred to in the following terms :

> 'I would point out that that profound scholar and humble Christian, the late Dr. Rashdall, was deeply pained when people charged him with denying the divinity of Christ. He did not hold the most common and prevalent view of the Incarnation, but he knew that the view which he held has not wanted supporters in any age of the Church, and he was prepared to defend it as wholly orthodox. And certainly no man that I have ever known had a more deep or more sincere love for our Blessed Lord.'

It was in 1921, as the outcome of his paper on 'Christ as Logos and Son of God,' read at the Girton Conference in August of that year, that Dr. Rashdall was assailed both in the Church and secular press with the most violent condemnation for his views expressed on that occasion. Among his assailants was not only Dr. Gore, but also the Roman Catholic Bishop of Salford, in whose diocese (if he can be said to have a diocese in this country) Canon Peter Green resided. This R.C. prelate commanded that in all churches and chapels within his jurisdiction Masses of Reparation should be said to avert the wrath of God from this land, threatened by the blasphemies of the Girton Conference.

JOHN WESLEY AND ENGLISH MODERNISM

(The bi-centenary of his 'evangelical conversion,' May 24, 1738.)

By W. L. Doughty, B.A., B.D.

ON Tuesday, June 8th, 1777, John Wesley, then 74 years of age, preached in the parish church of Worcester, the Rector being present. Wesley describes him as 'a candid, sensible man,' and goes on to say, 'he seemed much surprised, having never dreamed before that there was such a thing as common sense among the Methodists.' The incident is illuminating. The Rector of Worcester was not alone in his misconceptions, and he has numerous descendants to-day, amongst whom are such writers as see in Methodism only an institution suited to the exercise of their wit, but whose jests can only be appreciated by those as profoundly ignorant of what Methodism really is as the jesters themselves.

At the opening of his second Conference, held in Bristol in August, 1745, the first question proposed was, 'Should we still consider ourselves as little children, who have everything to learn?' and the answer was, 'Yes, so far as to have our minds always open to any farther light which God may give us.' From that open-mindedness Wesley never departed; indeed, with the passage of the years he held with less tenacity much that is not of the *esse* of Christian Faith and Practice, and looked with greater tolerance and deeper understanding upon some opinions that would have been anathema to him in his less mature days. In an open letter to Dr. Dodd, who later suffered execution for forgery, and published in the *Arminian Magazine* for April, 1756, he writes:

> 'I will thank you for showing me any mistake I am in; being not so tenacious of my opinions now as I was 20 or 30 years ago. Indeed, I am not fond of any opinion as such. I read the Bible with what attention I can, and regulate all my opinions thereby, to the best of my understanding. But I am always willing to receive more light.'

This extract illustrates not only Wesley's attitude to the particular doctrine under discussion, that of Christian Perfection, but his mental attitude to theological questions in general, and, particularly in its last clause, to every other kind of question. He was always 'willing to receive more light.' It is the attitude of a man of acute and disciplined mind, who all his life was a learner. It is recorded of him that, as a boy, when offered food at other than meal times, he would reply, 'I thank you; I will think of it.' This habit so exasperated his father at times that he exclaimed, 'Child, you think to carry everything by dint of argument; but you will find how little is ever done in the world by close reasoning'; and on one occasion the Rector remarked to his wife, 'I profess, sweetheart, I think our Jack would not attend to the most pressing necessities of nature unless he could give a reason for it.'

This early insight into the calibre of John Wesley's mind is valuable. Remembering his university distinction, his fine theological and classical training, his mastery of the science and art of logic, and at the same time never forgetful of the intellectual background of his age, it is easy to see Wesley as ranking amongst the most gifted of those Christian apostles whose leadership has been no less marked by intelligence than by piety. If a man sits easily to the general current opinions of his time in philosophy, science, criticism, morals theoretical and practical, and religion, and is content with unquestioning mind to make these opinions his own—for what such an appropriation is worth—he must perforce abide in undistinguished mediocrity. But Wesley is far from being a mediocrity. He said and did things which were strange and even shocking to the conventionally minded and that set the feet of others upon a new and joyous road. His name, in praise or dispraise, was upon every man's tongue. Such a man may be either a 'throw back,' seeking to re-energize a largely discredited creed, or he may be the prophet of a new age. Wesley was both.

This is illustrated in his attitude towards the Established Church. Those writers who attempt to minimize his love and reverence for the Church of England do injustice to his memory. His regard and attachment were so strong that the malignant opposition of individual bishops and clergymen failed

to shake his allegiance one jot. In his statement on 'Separation from the Church,' presented to the Conference of 1785, he defended himself against the charge that his ordinations constituted such a separation. 'I have no thought of it; I have many objections against it.' Nevertheless he knew perfectly well that a later separation was almost inevitable, and to the question 'Is it not possible there may be such a separation after you are dead?' his reply was: 'Undoubtedly it is. But what I said at our first Conference above forty years ago, I say still, "I dare not omit doing what good I can while I live, for fear of evils that may follow when I am dead."'

This loyalty to the order of the Anglican Church, open as it is to unfriendly criticism, embraced less assailable loyalty to her doctrines. Wesley's religious beliefs were confessedly based upon the Bible, the writings of the ante-Nicene Fathers and the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England. In that respect he stood, so far as the country generally was concerned, for a largely discredited or simply ignored creed. 'Everyone laughs if one talks of religion,' was Montesquieu's oft-quoted remark on the England of that day. Years of close study and religious fellowship and conversation convinced Wesley that the doctrines of the Anglican Church have an intellectual basis and are not contrary either to reason or the teaching of the New Testament. He disentangled them from Calvinistic and antinomian tendencies and accepted them on a basis of Arminian interpretation. This intellectual satisfaction did not, however, bring to Wesley that peace of mind and confidence of acceptance with God that he was convinced it is the peculiar province of true religion to bestow. That experience, which marked the beginning of a new life by a radical change in personality, came to him on May 24th, 1738, as he himself was assured, and is generally referred to as his 'evangelical conversion.' The Wesley who from that time set out to win England for God was a Wesley who had re-discovered, first intellectually and then emotionally, the truths of Christianity as set forth in the formularies of the English Church of the Reformation. Men looked at him and listened to him, and the dry bones of an almost forgotten theology began to live again, and to live in an English eighteenth century setting. In particular he revivified the New Testament

teaching about Justification by Faith, the Witness of the Spirit and Christian Perfection, or Holiness. Wesley was debtor to all that was spiritually true and significant in his Anglican and English heritage.

But the point for us to notice is that whilst Wesley, in his acceptance of Christian doctrine, was faithful to the general interpretation of the Early Church, he did not live in an intellectual world other than that of his own day. He was an eighteenth century man, very fully alive to the life of his age, familiar with its opinions and thought-forms; critical, assenting or dissenting, as the case might be, and making more and more allowance for the pressure of advancing knowledge and a tenser intellectual environment as he grew older. He had a profound respect for ascertained truth, or what seemed to be ascertained truth, in every realm, and whatever appealed to him, after such examination as he could give, as indubitably true, had to find accommodation in his mental and philosophical background. Illustrations of this abound and will be forthcoming. As we have seen, he was conscious of and repeatedly confessed his own general ignorance and willingness to learn from all who could teach. 'I trust my heart will always say, both to God and man, "What I know not, teach thou me."' Where exact truth was impossible and only contending opinions could be weighed he refused to be dogmatic. For example (the reference is to Hebrew points) he said, 'I am fully convinced that there is, at least, as much to be said on this as on the other side of the question. *But how is it that men are so positive on both sides, while demonstration is to be had on neither?*' This is not the language of a bigot or a fanatic who cannot see further than his own slenderly based or traditionally inherited opinions. It is that of a man eager for truth and open-minded in its absence.

For the functions of Reason, Wesley had unwavering respect. In June, 1741, he notes in his Journal his utter dissent from Luther, where Luther decries 'reason, right or wrong, as an irreconcilable enemy to the gospel of Christ.' 'Whereas,' Wesley continues, 'what is reason (the faculty so called) but the power of apprehending, judging and discoursing? Which power is no more to be condemned in the gross than seeing, hearing or feeling.' In 1768 he wrote to Thomas Rutherford, at one

time Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, who had said, 'It is a fundamental principle in the Methodist school that all who come into it must renounce their reason,' in these words:

> 'Sir, are you awake? Unless you are talking in your sleep, how can you utter so gross an untruth? It is a fundamental principle with us that to renounce reason is to renounce religion, that religion and reason go hand in hand, and that all irrational religion is false religion.'

Wesley's *Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion*, first published in 1743, is in itself sufficient answer to those who profess to regard him as something of a weak-minded enthusiast. It is the work of a man of finely trained, keenly critical and discerning mind. Step by step he engages the intellectual assent of his readers, anticipates their objections, and counters them on logical grounds. It is impossible to outline, here, this important pamphlet, which is worthy of serious consideration even to-day, and these quotations must suffice:

> 'One question still remains to be asked, What do you mean by *Reason?* I suppose you mean the Eternal Reason, or, the Nature of Things: The Nature of God and the Nature of Man, with the relations necessarily subsisting between them. Why, this is the very Religion *we* preach: A Religion evidently founded on, and every Way agreeable to Eternal Reason, to the essential Nature of Things. Its foundation stands on the Nature of God and the Nature of Man, together with their mutual relations.'
>
> 'We therefore not only allow, but earnestly exhort all who seek after true Religion, to use all the Reason which God hath given them, in searching out the Things of God. But your *Reasoning justly* not only on this, but on any Subject whatsoever, presupposes *True Judgments* already formed, whereon to ground your Argumentation. Else, you know, you will stumble at every Step: Because *ex falso non sequitur verum.* It is impossible, if your Premises are false, to infer from them true conclusions.'

Such a man could hardly fail to deal honestly with the evident facts of life. He did not live in a mental fog that distorts facts to make them fit in with unalterable theories. When, for instance, Wesley recognized 'the Fruits of the Spirit' in some life, he did not hesitate to ascribe essential Christianity to him who so exhibited them; that is to say, he was 'catholic' in the best sense. That comes out very clearly in an interesting entry in his Journal under date Tuesday, Dec. 1st, 1767:

> 'Being alone in the coach, I was considering several points of importance. And thus much appeared clear as the day:
>
> That a man may be saved who cannot express himself properly concerning Imputed Righteousness. Therefore, to do this is not necessary to salvation.

That a man may be saved who has not clear conceptions of it. (Yea, that never heard the phrase.) Therefore, clear conceptions of it are not necessary to salvation. Yea, it is not necessary to salvation to use the phrase at all.

That a pious churchman who has not clear conceptions even of Justification by Faith may be saved. Therefore, clear conceptions even of this are not necessary to salvation.

That a Mystic, who denies Justification by Faith (Mr. Law, for instance) may be saved. But, if so, what becomes of *articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiae?* If so, is it not high time for us

Projicere ampullas et sesquipedalia verba;

and to return to the plain word, "He that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him"?"

Riding to Epworth on October 11th, 1745, he notes:

'I read to-day part of the *Meditations of Marcus Antoninus*. What a strange emperor! And what a strange heathen! Giving thanks to God for all the good things he enjoyed! In particular, for His good inspiration, and for twice revealing to him in dreams things whereby he was cured of (otherwise) incurable distempers. I make no doubt that this is one of those "many" who "shall come from the east and the west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob," while "the children of the kingdom," nominal Christians, are "shut out."'

Again, writing in his magazine (*The Arminian Magazine*) for 1786, about Thomas Firmin, he says:

'I was exceedingly struck at reading the following Life; having long settled it in my mind that the entertaining wrong notions against the Trinity was inconsistent with real piety. *But I cannot argue against matters of fact.* I dare not deny that Mr. Firmin was a pious man, although his notions of the Trinity were quite erroneous.'

Preaching the funeral sermon for George Whitfield, with Calvinistic doctrines in mind, he said:

'Let us keep close to the grand scriptural doctrines which he (Whitefield) everywhere delivered. There are many doctrines of a less essential nature, with regard to which even the sincere children of God (such is the present weakness of human understanding) are, and have been, divided for many ages. In these things we may think and let think; we may "agree to differ." But, meanwhile, let us hold fast the essentials of "the faith which was once delivered to the saints."'

Such are not the views of a narrow-minded sectarian, and Wesley's whole liberal attitude is summed up for us in the notable sermon on 'The Catholic Spirit.' The sermon hinges on Jehu's question to Jehonadab, 'Is thine heart right, as my heart is with thy heart?' and the latter's reply, 'It is. If it be, give me thine hand.' These words run through the sermon like a refrain.

'But although a difference in opinions or modes of worship may prevent an entire external union, yet need it prevent our union in affection? Although we cannot think alike, may we not love alike? May we not be of one heart, though we are not of one opinion? Without

> all doubt we may. . . . It is certain, so long as we know but *in part*, that all men will not see all things alike. It is an unavoidable consequence of the present weakness and shortness of human understanding, that several men will be of several minds in religion as well as in common life. . . . No man can be assured that all his own opinions, taken together, are true. . . . Every wise man, therefore, will allow others the same liberty of thinking which he desires they should allow him; and will no more insist on their embracing his opinions, than he would have them to insist on his embracing theirs. He will bear with those who differ from him, and only ask him with whom he desires to unite in love that single question, "Is thy heart right, as my heart is with thy heart?"'

Wesley then goes on to explain that this question, in the mouth of a Christian, implies certain things, *viz.*:

> 'Is thy heart right with God? . . . Dost thou know Jesus Christ and Him crucified? . . . Is thy faith filled with the energy of love? . . . Art thou employed in doing, "not thy own will, but the will of Him that sent thee?" . . . Does the love of God constrain thee to serve Him with fear? . . . Is thy heart right toward thy neighbour? . . . Do you show your love by your works? . . . If it be so, give me thy hand.'
>
> 'By this,' says Wesley, 'I do not mean, Be of my opinion . . . nor, Embrace my modes of worship. . . . But, Love me with a very tender affection, as a friend that is closer than a brother; as a brother in Christ . . . with the love that is long-suffering and kind. . . . Commend me to God in all your prayers . . . Provoke me to love and good works . . . Join with me in the work of God; and let us go on hand in hand.'

Finally, Wesley points out that we may gather by inference from the foregoing what is a catholic spirit. It is not *speculative* latitudinarianism. 'It is not an indifference to all opinions: this is the spawn of hell, not the offspring of heaven.' Nor is a catholic spirit any kind of *practical* latitudinarianism. 'It is not indifference as to public worship, or as to the outward manner of performing it.' Nor is a catholic spirit indifference to all congregations. 'A man of a Catholic spirit is one who, in the manner above mentioned, gives his hand to all whose hearts are right with his heart.'

These extracts are important for our purpose, for the sermon is one in which Wesley 'officially' sets forth his positions. These sentiments have the warmest approbation of Methodists to-day. In his important pamphlet *The Character of a Methodist* (1742) Wesley declared that a Methodist is one who has 'the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost given unto him . . . who loves the Lord his God with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his mind, and with all his strength.' He then elaborates this and shows its implications, finally antici-

pating that someone will say, 'Why, these are only the common, fundamental principles of Christianity.' He replies:

> 'This is the very truth; I know they are no other; and I would to God both thou and all men knew that I, and all that follow my judgment, do vehemently refuse to be distinguished from other men by any but the common principles of Christianity—the plain, old Christianity that I teach, renouncing and detesting all other marks of distinction. . . . By these fruits of a living faith do we labour to distinguish ourselves from the unbelieving world, from all those whose minds or lives are not according to the gospel of Christ. But from real Christians, of whatsoever denomination they be, we earnestly desire not to be distinguished at all; nor from any who sincerely follow after what they know they have not yet attained.'

Enough has been written and quoted to show the large-hearted yet discriminating charity of Wesley in matters of religious faith. Much more might be adduced, but there are other matters that claim a measure of attention.

Whilst Wesley held, and apparently never questioned, the generally accepted belief in the Divine inspiration of the Bible, Biblical Criticism as we know it being then undreamed of, he did so in no crippling, literal sense. In one famous passage he declares his passionate desire to know 'the way to heaven,' and continues:

> 'God Himself has condescended to teach the way; for this end He came from heaven. He hath written it down in a book! O give me that book! At any price, give me the book of God. I have it: here is knowledge for me. Let me be *homo unius libri*.'

But he uses that book intelligently. True, there were occasions when he endowed it with oracular authority, but such use needs to be judged in the light of his times. The passage just quoted continues, 'I search after and consider parallel passages of Scripture, "comparing spiritual things with spiritual."' It was with the religious teaching of the Bible that Wesley was concerned, and not its verbal accuracy. Discrepancies did not worry him. Those, for example, in the genealogies of the First and Third Gospels he ascribes to inaccuracies in the official records which the evangelists used and merely copied. Nor was he a slave to the English text. Writing in the Introduction to his *Notes on the New Testament*, he says:

> 'I design first to set down the text itself in the common English translation, which in general is far the best that I have seen either in any ancient or modern language. Yet I do not say that it is incapable of being brought in some cases nearer to the original. Neither will I affirm that the Greek copies from which the translation was made are

> always the most correct. And therefore I shall take the liberty as occasion may require to offer here and there a small alteration.'

It is worthy of note that on 113 occasions Wesley anticipated, in whole or in part, alterations of text in the Version of 1881. In his edition of the *Book of Common Prayer* for the use of his own people he excised such portions of the Psalms as he deemed 'highly improper for the mouths of a Christian congregation.'

Wesley's interests, however, ranged over much wider fields. He was a keen seeker after truth in the realm of natural science, nor did he appear to be at all embarrassed in his religious beliefs by those revelations of science which he clearly welcomed. Remembering that Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727) died when Wesley was 24 years of age, it is surprising that there is no more than occasional reference to him in Wesley's writings. Clearly, however, he was acquainted with his theories, and if he had been in violent disagreement he would almost certainly have found opportunity for stating so, and giving his reasons. Prof. A. C. M'Giffert, in his book *Protestant Thought before Kant*, states categorically (p. 173) 'Wesley refused to accept the Copernican astronomy on the ground that it contradicted Scripture.' I believe that statement would be difficult to substantiate. How, for example, does it stand in face of the following quotation from Wesley's *Survey of Natural Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 112, published in 1770?

> 'But while philosophers were divided between the Ptolemaic, the Tychonic, the Cartesian, and the Copernican systems, Sir Isaac Newton stepped forward in the plenitude of genius, and like a mighty umpire, laid down the laws of nature and of motion, and by comparing all the phenomena of the heavens, found out the true system of the universe, and confirmed the Copernican system. He demonstrated by unanswerable arguments, that it could not possibly be otherwise, without the utter subversion of all the laws of nature.'

Wesley's beliefs in witchcraft and Divine visitation by earthquakes and natural calamities are not, in that age, necessarily the marks of an ignorant or superstitious mind. It is impossible to believe that Wesley would have entertained them had he lived in this more enlightened age. He must not be judged out of his time-setting.

His interest in electrical phenomena was deep and there are many references to it. Under date Friday, October 16th, 1747, he writes :

> 'I went with two or three friends to see what are called the electrical experiments. How must these also confound those poor half-thinkers who will believe nothing but what they can comprehend! Who can comprehend how fire lives in water, and passes through it more freely than through air? How flame issues out of my finger, real flame, such as sets fire to spirits of wine? How these, and many more as strange phenomena, arise from the turning round a glass globe? It is all mystery; if haply by any means God may hide pride from man!'

In his Journal he outlined Benjamin Franklin's *Letters* on the subject, and in time he set up an electrical plant of his own for the treatment of poor people suffering from certain complaints. In 1768 he read Dr. Priestley's 'ingenious book on electricity,' with great approval.

Two years later we find him reading Dr. Burnet's *Theory of the Earth*. The work, produced about 1692, is fanciful and of little scientific value, and Wesley allows the probability of some of his theories. It is not so much Wesley's acceptance or rejection of such theories that is of interest, as the fact that he read such books and was prepared to judge them on their merits.

As a final illustration of Wesley's attitude to scientific speculation I select the following extracts from his five-volume work entitled *A Survey of the Wisdom of God in Creation; or a Compendium of Natural Philosophy*. Wesley abridges, for popular reading, the work of one of his contemporaries, Charles de Bonnet, of Geneva (1720-1793), and dwells upon his theories with evident approval and pleasure. Here are Wesley's own words:

> 'There are no sudden changes in nature; all is gradual and elegantly varied. There is no being which has not either above or beneath it some that resemble it in certain characters, and differ from it in others. . . . From a plant to man . . . the transition from one species to another is almost insensible. The polypus links the vegetable to the animal. The flying squirrel unites the bird to the quadruped. The ape bears affinity to the quadruped and the man. . . . By what degrees does nature raise herself up to man? How will she rectify this head that is always inclined to the earth? How change these paws into flexible arms? What method will she make use of to transform these crooked feet into supple and skilful hands? . . . The ape is this rough draft of man; an imperfect representation which nevertheless bears a resemblance to him, and is the last creature that serves to display the admirable progression of the works of God! . . . There is a prodigious number of continued links between the most perfect man and the ape.'

Like Bonnet himself, Wesley looked upon this development as

the method or process that God uses. They did not look for the cause of life in the process itself.

These are surprising sentiments. Lamarck was only 47 when Wesley died in 1791, and Charles Darwin was not born until 1809. This is not to acclaim Wesley as an incipient pre-Darwinian evolutionist, but it does reveal a mind capable of receiving and understanding the scientific truths up to that time established and even of speculating intelligently on the nature of possible future developments. Such a mind can never entertain a scheme of doctrine that in its positive statements or its implications is flatly contradictory of what is undeniably true in the world of experiment and experience and wholly at variance with the cultural level of its age.

Such a statement, however, leaves a large sphere for the operations of Christian faith. Of this Christian faith John Wesley had no small measure, and from it he drew his power; in its invigorating air he ever lived. Thus, with a mind eagerly open to all that men could teach him about the amazing works and methods of God, his mission in life was unaffected, and in the spirit of his brother's great hymn he continued to 'contest this kingdom for Jesus Christ':

> 'Come, sinners, to the gospel-feast;
> Let every soul be Jesu's guest;
> Ye need not one be left behind,
> For God hath bidden all mankind.
> Sent by my Lord, on you I call;
> The invitation is to all:
> Come, all the world: Come, sinner, thou;
> All things in Christ are ready now.'

A MODERN CRUSADE

By the Rev. F. S. Horan, M.A., Vicar of Kingston, Corfe Castle, Dorset.

SOME of the papers read at the last Conference of Modern Churchmen, notably those by Claud Mullins and L. B. Cross, set one thinking how we can make our influence as Modernists more widely felt, to reach a larger public, and get Truths extremely real and vital to ourselves across to the vast majority of the laity, to whom Modernism is but a name, possibly even a name of doubtful repute.

Have we a message that we hold to be vital, for which we feel real enthusiasm? Nothing succeeds without enthusiasm. As Modernists we are out above all things for religious *truth*—we believe that we have discovered a great deal of late years. Should not this very fact kindle enthusiasm—the enthusiasm of pioneers and discoverers eager to share with others the good that they have found?

My belief is that with more enthusiasm and more drive, Modernism could at the present time make much headway to the great benefit of the Church and of religion generally. Has not the time come to 'launch out into the deep and let down our net for a draught?' As long as we are content to be a small academic *coterie*, meeting once a year, listening to papers and discussions, and then going home to chew the cud till next year, we shall never influence to any great extent the rank and file of the laity or increase our membership. We need to be up and doing. We need the enthusiasm that will make us go all out for Truth and Reality in Religion, regardless of consequences, and start a campaign of educative penetration.

The needs and demands of men offer the Church of England a great opportunity at the present time.

L. B. Cross sounded a spirited call to action in the closing paper of the Conference. To quote some of his words:

> 'The first action necessary on the part of the Church will be to enlarge its borders . . . It must allow the laity an equal place with the Clergy on the Councils of the Church. Priestly domination has spelt ruin for the Church in the past, it would spell ruin equally for it in the future . . . The crying need is for spiritually alive men and women of every profession and walk in life, who will generate spiritual power, and permeate society with it. The organisation of the Church is not an end in itself. The Church can only fulfil its functions by providing the multitudes of laymen and laywomen who conduct the ordinary affairs of life with a living working faith.'

It was in pondering over these words and much else heard at the Conference that the thought came—What practically can be done about it? Is not some kind of forward move possible for the purpose of gripping the hearts and minds, the talents, enthusiasm and co-operation of the laity of England in a big forward move for all that Christ stands for and that the world is hungering for—Love—Brotherhood—Peace and Goodwill among men? An effort to rope in all men and women of good-

will in a Crusade that might even in time reach beyond our national borders, and give to a distracted world a vision of a spiritual rebirth, and, as a consequence, a new way of life?

The 'Groups' are attempting something of the kind on lines of their own—all honour to them! They appeal to certain types of mind. Many of us cannot go with them in all their methods, but we can learn something from them. We Modernists would do well to capture some of their enthusiasm for the spread of our own Message, based not merely on religious experience, but on reason, scholarship and enlightened criticism.

The point is, after twenty-four years of Annual Conferences, is it not time that we came out more clearly into the open and attempted to spread more widely the Faith that is in us?

Multitudes, I believe, are hungering for and would welcome what we could give them. They are not wholly satisfied with material things, they are inarticulate about religious things. They don't know quite what they want, at any rate they can't put it into words. They really want what we could give them towards a reasonable Christian Faith—a Faith that mind as well as heart can grasp and hold with a sense of reality.

They are mostly unattracted by the ordinary Church services. There is so much unreality and superstition in our hymns, so much queer stuff in sermons, so much in our 'incomparable Liturgy' that absolutely puts them off. The Creeds stick in their throat. They are in complete bewilderment about what to believe and what not to believe, and they mostly shirk the difficulty by keeping away from Church altogether.

There is an immense amount of latent Spiritual Force in the country finding no outlet through ordinary Church channels. It is running to waste. We have a chance to 'harness Niagara'—to make this spiritual force splendidly serviceable.

This is a great opportunity for the Church. She has all the 'plant'—grand traditions, a tremendous inheritance from the past, a line of saints, heroes, martyrs, reaching back two thousand years. And yet—What is she doing with it all to-day? What is her influence among the rank and file in national and international affairs? Is it anything approaching the mighty influence for God, for Christ, for Righteousness and Peace and Goodwill that it could be?

There is any amount of Church Organization—very efficient bureaucratically, very ecclesiastical : the Church Assembly, Diocesan Conferences, Ruri-decanal Conferences — all extremely busy, largely over matters financial. We are flooded with literature of all kinds—reports, statements, appeals. These are no doubt necessary, but they should have a very secondary place to that for which the Church mainly stands—the witness for God's *Truth*. As it is—with all the position she holds in the national life, with all her thorough-going meticulous organization—there is a hold-up of the vital Spiritual Force that she was created to give to the world, and which would make the Christian religion to-day the wonderful living thing it once was.

With all that she does tackle, does the Church tackle the real problem—the world's need at the present time of a new interpretation and a new presentation of Christianity?

With the new knowledge that has come with the proved facts of science, research and criticism, much of the old interpretation will no longer hold water. It served its purpose once, but it will not serve for our day and generation. The glory of Christianity, that which gives it perpetual youth, is that it is capable of re-interpretation, that it has a marvellous power of adaptability, without sacrificing a jot or tittle of principle. It has met the needs of men in the generations that are past. Both learned and unlearned have found it their strength and their stay. It can meet the needs of men to-day, whatever their status or culture; but it must be presented as a Truth that fits in with all other Truth and Knowledge that has come to mankind in the passing of the years. For this it obviously needs re-interpretation, which the Church should have the faith and courage to give, beginning with a thorough overhaul of Creeds, Doctrines and Liturgy.

The Church holds the very elixir of life that could save the world to-day. But she holds it within ecclesiastical barriers — she won't let it out freely. It is as though a magnificent river were largely damned up, which, if fully released, could bring life and fertility to a vast arid country that is drying up and perishing for want of it.

A dam of 'isms' holds up what the Church could give — Clericalism, Mediaevalism, Dogmatism, Obscurantism. The job before us Modernists, and a fine one, is to throw in all our

weight to break down this dam, and release the whole great volume of water to do its life-giving work.

As Dr. Major has put it, using a different metaphor :

> 'If the Christian Church would only scrap its Mediaevalism, heal its divisions and make full use of that knowledge which the Divine Spirit is giving us to-day, we should see tremendous advances in building Jerusalem in England's green and pleasant land.'

Those words give us a vision of a big *Constructive* Effort that is needed. We Modernists want not merely to destroy but to construct—to erect a Temple of Truth—to spread our Faith —to revitalise our Church, very dear to us because of what we owe to her in the past. We want to make her work for Christ more real and more effective *now*. For this we need an increase in numbers, and the backing of all men and women of goodwill who see as we do, and will throw in their lot with us.

The need in these days of unrest is so urgent, the struggle between Idealism and Materialism in many shapes and forms so intense and so critical that it behoves all to whom the Christian Ideal is precious—who feel it to be vital—to join in a Crusade, and present a United Front against opposing forces. Therefore we should welcome every ally, all and sundry from whatever class, denomination or 'school of thought'—all Truth-seekers, all who feel the urgent need of a simplified, practical, vital Christianity.

A wonderful field is open to us. I seem to see a 'Promised Land' ahead if only we have the courage to go up and possess it.

I have had a very varied experience as a parson in town and country parishes, in the Navy, among the Troops, in school work. (There are some advantages in being a rolling stone!) From private talks I have had with men in all ranks of life, I believe we should find numerous allies. Men want Christ to-day as much as ever they did, but they want the manly Christ of the Gospels, not the anaemic stained-glass-window Christ so often presented. I believe there are thousands who would welcome our Modern Gospel if we can only get it across to them — men of the British Legion, Toc H, ex-Service men of all grades, professional men, schoolmasters, doctors, actors, artists, naval and military men, rovers, scouts and guides. I know from experience that among them there are crowds who would embrace

a religion that they can whole-heartedly believe in—a presentation of the Christian Faith that appeals to their intelligence as well as their feeling, and who would gladly lend a hand in the adventure of spreading such a faith.

Have not we clergy been ordained to the service of *The Man* Christ Jesus, He whose life has given the world the Vision of the 'highest, holiest Manhood'?

Do we as a body give to the world a reflection of that Vision?

It always seems to me that the 'Stage Parson' gives an answer to that. The 'Stage Parson' would be an impossible caricature if we clergy were men of the type we ought to be. The great job before us is how to get Tom, Dick and Harry to see through all our caricatures to the *real thing*, to give men a vision of the Christ in all His Greatness, Manliness, Truth and Love.

The trouble is that the human Christ has been so long obscured by the ecclesiastical Christ. However much that may have appealed in mediaeval times, it does not appeal now. We must somehow present a different Christ from that, if we are to win the manhood of England.

I believe the Modern Churchmen's Union has a great contribution to make towards the desired end, and that the Call comes to us to make it.

I thank God for what 'Modernism' has done for my Faith and my life. It has made the Christian Religion infinitely more vital and real to me. I am eager that what has been of so great spiritual help to many like myself, should be more widely shared with others who at present know little about what Modernism stands for.

I am glad to see that our new quarterly journal, *The Way*, in its November issue, strongly advocates a Modernist forward movement. To quote from the Editorial:

> 'The Annual Conference has a great value in its witness to people outside the Churches of a real endeavour on the part of Modernists to present a living and creative faith for the twentieth century. But what is the next step? It is obvious that we cannot heal a sick world by discussion alone. We are particularly concerned with the young . . . who are wondering whether they . . . can find an enlightened and practical faith which will really help them in their daily needs. We believe that liberal Christianity offers what they are seeking . . . Why do we seem to make so little impact on the masses? May not our reason be that the laity have been slow and backward in their witness? There

> must be multitudes of Modernists who desire reforms within the Church and the propagation of an intelligent and intelligible faith, who never make themselves heard either in the market-place, the office, or the Church Council. The prospects for Modernism are not bright unless the lay forces of liberal Christianity seek to become much more effective than they are. It might be a good thing for Modernists to set themselves in the coming year to witness strongly to their faith wherever possible . . . and to give special attention to the question of the reform of our traditional liturgies and to make constructive suggestions for the enrichment of public worship.'

Stress is laid here on the need of *Witness* for the Faith that is in us, and some practical suggestions are made. My article is chiefly concerned with giving a *Vision* of a Need, but one does not want it to remain a vision only. Vision alone will not suffice unless followed by *Action*. I was pulled up kindly but firmly on this point by one who had read something of what I have written. 'Quite good,' he said, 'but what do you propose *doing*?' I replied, 'Nothing at the moment but give a vision and hope to stir enthusiasm that will lead to some definite action.' If the idea of a Forward Movement for the spread of the Modernist Faith catches on, and receives sufficient support from members of the M.C.U., some of us can get together and make plans for *Action*. My questioner had some plans of action in his mind, which he will, I think, divulge, if things get going. I am not without some practical ideas myself, when the time is ripe for them.

Meanwhile, one definite thing that we can begin to do at once is to work for the Loughborough Conference — work to make it a great success in numbers anyhow. *Try to get new blood into it.* 'Bright young things,' if we can! Make contact with as many 'likely' individuals as possible between now and then. Talk Modernism when we get half an opportunity! We shall find many in all walks of life who will respond, who are only too glad to discuss the big questions, and to find someone with whom they can talk quite freely and who is not shocked at their opinions on religion, sex, divorce and other matters — many who are only too anxious to have some light thrown upon their problems, who might even be induced to come to a Modernist Conference and receive more. We 'old hands' can set to work to spread interest in Modernism, *show the need of it*, try to get new members for the coming Conference, and help to make it a big thing. It at least gives us at the moment a definite

objective to work for, and it would be a fine gesture of welcome to our new President.

From contacts and talks I have had since the last Conference, with laymen who knew little or nothing of what 'Modernism' stands for, I have gained much encouragement and an indication that the time is ripe for a 'Modern Crusade.' One of them was the editor of a daily paper, to whom I gave a copy of the *Modern Churchman* for last October, with the reports of the papers read at the Conference. He wrote to me as follows:

> 'I've given much attention to the October number of the *Modern Churchman*, and *the stimulus to renewed faith it has brought me* [italics mine], apart from the mere mental satisfaction of finding myself in agreement with its closely-knit reasoning — is a matter for which I wish to express my indebtedness to you . . . Some of the papers I went over again to find what emphasis had been given to the need for getting this vital message made a "living word," in your own phrase "getting it over." Your idea of enrolling the thinking lay element in a practical fellowship appears to me an excellent one. I would like some day to hear more about the measure of acceptance your ideas have been accorded. Meanwhile I wish to assure you that if in any small way I can be of any service, I am yours to command.'

Another—an ex-naval man, now running a large business—was enthusiastic about this idea of a forward move to spread Modern Thought about the Christian Religion. The modernist view came to him as a complete revelation, but appealed strongly as being vital to the Cause of the Christian Faith. 'I'm with you,' he said, 'in a venture of this kind. We want something to make religion a reality to the average man.'

* * * * *

To sum up. These are some things that I feel we should stress in a 'Modern Crusade' of enlightenment: First, *A Real Christ.* The main idea that we need to get across with conviction and vigour to the average man is our answer to the fundamental question which determines Christian Belief and Enterprise—'*What think ye of Christ?*' We want to present the glorious human Figure of the Gospels, without the ecclesiastical trappings that have for so long obscured it. We want to present a Divine Christ, but Divine because in Him we see revealed the perfection of humanity; One who is like us in kind, but infinitely above us in degree — not separated from mankind by reason of a miraculous birth (to Modernists the Divinity of our

Lord does not depend upon that), but made 'in all things like unto His brethren.' Our great Elder Brother, who while sharing our nature and our manhood absolutely, yet raised it to that peak of perfection, where in wonder and reverence we acclaim it Divine. Then, in Christ we have indeed a *real* example. Then in Him we see a Goal of Attainment, made possible for everyone who takes for his spiritual guide *The Man* Christ Jesus, who has shown the world what God is and what man can become, who has done this (to use credal language) 'not by conversion of Godhead into flesh, but by taking Manhood into God.'

Besides this main conviction of what our Lord means to us, there are other good things that we have to offer 'Everyman':

That we believe Christianity to be a way of life rather than an assent to a body of doctrines, many of them incomprehensible.

That we believe that Deeds are more important than Creeds.

That we believe that no Truth can lead away from God. We are open-minded to receive all fresh scientific knowledge that may come to us, and feel the need of keeping in close touch with all research work, historical, physical, psychical, etc.

That we believe that the Church Services might with great advantage be simplified, diversified, beautified, and made much more real and arresting. That mawkish and sentimental hymns should be scrapped, lessons much more carefully selected, and not necessarily limited to the Bible, especially in the case of Old Testament ones. That opportunity should be given for laymen to take some active part in Church Services, and that pulpits should be open to the laity, both men and women, possessed of a message.

That we have a credible view of Survival of bodily Death, not a resuscitation of the old worn-out 'body-clothes' which we bury in a grave, or better, burn in a crematorium, but an immediate passing of the Spirit to another stage of existence, where there is further scope and opportunity for 'His servants to serve Him.' That our belief on this point is well expressed in these lines of Bishop Brent:

> 'Love is eternal — Life is immortal,
> And Death is only the horizon.
> And the horizon is nothing
> Save the limit of our sight.'

These are some of the things we have to offer 'the average man.' There are plenty more.

I fancy I can hear some of the 'Old Brigade' say, 'Yes, but there is nothing new in all this.' No, nor anything new under the sun; but my point is that what is a matter of common belief to the stalwarts of the M.C.U. is still a *terra incognita* to the multitudes whom we want to serve and help along the way. To most of them Modernism would come as a revelation and an illumination, as once it came to me.

To so many it is still the Infallible Bible, the Blood-Theology, the Golden Streets, the Rending Tomb, the Last Trump, the Judgment Throne, the Hell of Fire and so on, if it is anything. True, they have ceased to believe most of this in their heart of hearts. Some give lip-assent because they have nothing to put in its place. *They think it is that, or nothing.*

Let us try to give them the '*Something*' that Christianity really is — a glorious way of life, with the joy of service to God and man, helping us to fulfil the object of our creation. I know it is easy to put forward Ideals, but extremely difficult to carry them into effect. My hope is that some keen Modernists may before long be able to get together and discuss practical ways of extending our Modernist Faith, and so help to make the vision of a rebirth of the Christian Church a reality.

Modernism has a great future if only we of the present generation seize our opportunity of making the Light of Truth that it has brought to us available for others. This is 'a day of good tidings, let us not hold our peace.'

* * * * *

[Since this was written, the Church's Report on Doctrine has appeared, for which, as reported in the *Times* of February 10th, the Council of the M.C.U. has expressed its gratitude. It is a great step forward. *Laus Deo!*]

THE MASTER OF THE TEMPLE'S RECOLLECTIONS AND REFLECTIONS*

By The Editor.

EMINENT historians have been known to declare that more historic truth can be extracted from autobiography, at any rate by readers of discernment, than from any other form of historical narrative. Whether this be so in all cases or not, we are inclined to believe that clerical autobiographies give a much truer view of Church life than can be derived from the reading of the standard Church histories.

Canon Anson's autobiography certainly performs such a service for those who wish to understand important aspects of English Church life during the last half-century. Mr. Anson's experiences have been of the most varied kind, and he narrates them with the circumspective discernment and pensive humour of one who has garnered the harvest of a quiet eye. His book is full of good stories and we cannot forbear citing some of them.

Mr. Anson's first curacy was of such a kind that, although he was of a studious disposition, he found that parish visiting left him no time whatsoever for study. Frederick Temple, then Bishop of London, who had made him Gospeller at his ordination, having learnt of the situation sent for him and said :

> If you *must* choose between reading and visiting, go on with your reading. If you give up your reading, by the time you are forty, you will not be preaching God's Word, but your own word, which is a very different thing.'

The best kind of church teaching is not to be judged by church attendance. Canon Anson gives an instance of this :

> 'Only the other day I met a man whom I had prepared for confirmation some forty-six years ago. He told me that he had always tried to live up to what he had been taught at that time. I expected him to tell me that he had continued to be a regular churchgoer, but what he did tell me was that he and his wife had taken a homeless old woman into their house, and meant to keep her there until she died ' (p. 147).

Dr. Sheepshanks, Bishop of Norwich, famous for having walked on foot from Kamchatka to Moscow, paid an episcopal

* *Looking Forward.* By Harold Anson. (Heinemann. 1938. 10/6.)

visit when Mr. Anson was Vicar of a small parish near Ipswich. After the manner of bishops, he asked the Vicar whether he had any special difficulties. The Vicar confessed that he was troubled by the poor attendance at Holy Communion and wondered how he ought to deal with it. The Bishop replied :

> ' There is only one right way, to make people communicants. Get them to love the Lord Jesus Christ, and then they will want to be communicants. There is no other way.'

Here is a story of another simple-minded Father in God, Festing of St. Albans, to whom Mr. Anson was domestic chaplain. The Bishop had been invited to conduct a Quiet Day for the bishops of the province, so

> ' He searched in the cupboard where he kept his old sermons, and, to his astonishment, told me it was full of dry-rot. This he said in all solemnity. " However," he added, " I have found a set of addresses which I gave some years ago to the Girls' Friendly Society. On looking through these, I really find nothing which does not apply equally well to the needs of bishops. So I propose to give them these "! '

The following incident in Anglican attempts to secure closer relations with the Orthodox Church is not without its moral :

> ' A Russian Orthodox bishop, on his way to the United States, joined the East Anglian bishops at breakfast, accompanied by his interpreter, Mr. Birkbeck. Being a fast-day, the Bishop did not join with us in the fellowship of eggs and bacon. Presently he murmured something in Russian, and the interpreter announced ' His Lordship wishes to say how deeply conscious he is of the great common bond which unites all the bishops present in one.' Bishop Creighton, as spokesman for the Anglican bishops, asked Mr. Birkbeck to assure the Oriental prelate that they all felt as he did. A pause followed, and strange noises proceeded from the Russian bishop. Mr. Birkbeck smiled, and presently remarked, " His Lordship says that the English bishops will understand that he refers to our common hatred of the Pope " ' (p. 150).

Mr. Anson cites a verse written by Sir Francis Doyle which voices the normally inarticulate feeling of masses of English laity who are not represented in the House of Laymen, yet stand for Christian ideals of character and conduct in our national life :

> ' An unpretentious Christian man,
> And this was still his simple plan,
> To have with clergymen to do
> As little as a good man can ' (p. 65).

Mr. Anson spent some nine years as a clergyman in New Zealand. He writes thus of his experiences as a rural vicar :

> ' The arrangement at these small bush settlements was that on one Sunday in the month there was an Anglican service, on another a Pres-

byterian service, on another a Wesleyan. The same congregation attended all, the same lady played the same squeaky harmonium, and we had the same hymn-book. At Normanby, when the Presbyterians or Wesleyans had a harvest festival, we closed our church, and they closed theirs on our Festival Day, and joined in our worship. The good people were still totally unenlightened as to the differences between all these sects, and I cannot say that this ignorance appeared to do them any harm' (p. 159).

What Mr. Anson writes is quite true. It is possible to have sectarian organizations maintained without any degree of sectarian feeling, and so without any religious disadvantage to the adherents of the different denominations. There is, however, the economic disadvantage to be taken into consideration. We remember a former Bishop of Ballarat saying, 'In our larger Australian townships you can see four underpaid ministers riding four underfed horses ministering to four scanty congregations in four separate places of worship, where one minister well-paid and on a well-fed horse could do all they are doing more efficiently.'

This autobiography abounds with valuable reflections on various phases of Church life, the lessons of which have still to be learnt and applied in some Church circles. Mr. Anson was fortunate enough to be a *protégé* of the great Liddon at Christ Church, Oxford, of whom he tells the following almost incredible story:

'Well I remember Dr. Liddon picking a clover leaf, and, holding it up, saying very solemnly, "Is it possible, dear friend, to believe that this plant was created for any other purpose than to teach us the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity"?'

Another story which he relates of Liddon should please our fundamentalists:

'I was placed next to him, and the conversation turned to the recent great strike at the London docks, organised by Mr. John Burns. . . . Dr. Liddon was greatly shocked at this exhibition of social anarchy, as he considered it. Seeing, I suppose, that I remained silent, he turned, with his captivating smile, and said: "I know what you are thinking. You are saying, 'There is an old crusted Tory!' " "No" I answered, "I was thinking that John Burns is only doing to-day among the dockers what Moses did once in the Egyptian brick trade." To this Dr. Liddon gently and sadly replied: "Ah! but, dear friend, we must always remember that Moses was acting under divine inspiration, and we have no reason to suppose that any such thing applies to Mr. Burns!"' (p. 109).

In view of this Fundamentalism in a Canon of Christ Church, it

is not surprising that Mr. Anson should have heard a vicar of North Hinksey, Oxford, declare in a sermon that

> 'Adam was a man of such superhuman intelligence that when the animals were brought to him he called them by their correct names the very first time that he saw them!'

Yet it is only just to recall that the vicar was but re-echoing, not simply the views of John Milton, but those of the great Dr. South, who lived nearly a century later and declared that Aristotle was but the rubbish of an Adam.

Although the experiences of Mr. Anson's life are of quite absorbing interest for at least some of his clerical contemporaries, his reflections upon the lessons of his ministry seem to us to have greater value for the general reader. It is to some of these practical reflections we desire to call attention:

> 'I look backward, then, with much gratitude to all that the Church of England has meant to me in the past, to me and to those brought up as I was in the atmosphere of Bible images and Prayer-book phraseology—yet with not a little anxiety lest a new generation, speaking a different language, yet none the less sincere than my own, shall be alienated from the Church of their fathers by a too great unwillingness to part with thought-forms which have had their day, served their purpose, and now are in urgent need of Christian burial' (p. 279).

Mr. Anson thus develops the reason for his conclusions:

> 'Our services are still full of references which belong to an age when God was regarded as the Sultan to be appeased only by costly sacrifices and fulsome praises. In the case of those of us who have been brought up in these ideas, the language passes unnoticed. A new generation to whom such phrases as "being washed in blood," "saved from God's wrath," "a propitiation for our sins," have no sacred associations, they are either unmeaning or definitely shocking. No one would deny that ideas of great truth and value underlie such phrases. It may be that a new generation needs to learn these underlying truths, but they will not easily learn them in language which has no associations with their life. St. Paul was speaking in the language of current religious thought when he said that Christ is our lamb, our sacrifice, our propitiation: that it is with His blood that we need sprinkling, His blood that we need to drink. Not bullocks and goats, but the character of Jesus is the true medium of access to God. Can we, however, put people back again into that phase of thinking? Are we really using St. Paul's method when we use language which has no relation to what people are thinking about to-day? Lambs and bullocks and doves are no longer the natural stock-in-trade (if we may use such a word) of religious thought. Is it necessary or even possible to express our highest thought through these channels? My own belief is that it will not ultimately be possible, and that even to-day we are making our message less comprehensible than it need be by presenting it to the twentieth century under forms of the first. Dr. Lake in his *Stewardship of Faith* points out how in the conflict between paganism and Christian-

ity, although the learned exponents of the ancient faith assured the religious seekers of the day that they need not take the ancient myths at their face value, but that they had a meaning other than that which was apparent, Christianity won the victory because it could speak of simple facts of history, not with a face veiled, but with an open countenance.

'Is it not true that religion is losing power because it feels bound to retain so much which either has no meaning to-day or else is positively untrue unless explained with such a degree of elaboration and reservation that men lose the sense of simplicity and sincerity which was the particular irresistible charm of the primitive Christian faith?' (p. 278).

The greatest chapter in his volume is most appropriately its last. It is entitled 'a credo,' and expresses the positive, moral, and spiritual convictions of the author. These convictions are essentially Christian, and they are also essentially Modernist. Those who complain of the negations of Modernism, of its aridity, of its lack of inspiration, of its lack of power to touch, and touch most tenderly, the heart and emotions, will find nothing of the sort in Mr. Anson's credo. To attempt to 'pot' it in a review would be inept. There are, however, a few sentences in the chapter which we cannot refrain from citing. They are not the most profound nor the most moving, but they are of the nature of correctives of tendencies in contemporary ecclesiastical thinking and teaching. Mr. Anson is deeply concerned to correct the view that membership in the visible Church, or some portion of it, is a necessity for salvation. Whereas he plainly sees that what is necessary for salvation is membership in the invisible Church — fellowship with the blessed company of all faithful people—and that this may be possessed in the profoundest and most effective manner without membership in any portion of the visible Church.

'I feel therefore that it is membership in the invisible Church which is all-important to the spirtual life.'

Very closely connected with this conviction is the obvious conclusion that Church sacraments are not necessarily means of Divine Grace or vehicles of the Holy Spirit. They may be or they may not be. There is serious need to protest against an increasingly materialistic and mechanistic conception of the Sacraments in our contemporary Church life.

'When I hear a bishop say after confirming candidates "Now a great change has come over you : before this service the Holy Spirit had

not been given you: now it has been given. Henceforward you have the spirit abiding in you," I feel that this is not only not what the Prayer Book says, but it is not the teaching of the New Testament. The Prayer Book says that the object of Confirmation is "to certify them by this sign of God's favour and gracious goodness towards them." The New Testament says that the works of the Spirit are the only sure sign of the Spirit's abiding in a life' (p. 290).

Particularly instructive and inspiring is the way in which Mr. Anson deals with the relation of the modern Christian to our Saviour. That relationship is one of intense and devoted loyalty, but the loyalty has nothing in it that is servile, or unintelligent, or imitationist.

'Yet we are not called, and this I see more clearly than I did, just to imitate Jesus. All imitation is bad, and Jesus would not have us be mere copyists. . . .

'If there were no doctrine of the Holy Spirit in Christianity, we might become merely imitators of a past age, looking back continually to the circumstances in which Jesus lived, instead of facing our own circumstances in His spirit.

'It is not the Will of God that we should merely be faithful copyists of a model, pre-ordained for our meticulous efforts to repeat, world without end. We are created to be creators ourselves. Heaven is not a place where we shall enjoy eternal changelessness, but a place in which we shall share in the eternal energy of creation, where God "makes all things new."

'I am sure that this gospel of creativeness needs to be preached far more than it has been in the past' (p. 287).

Canon Anson's reminiscences deal with a very wide and varied range of English social life; we have selected only a few of the ecclesiastical and theological aspects of it to indicate the quality of his volume.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE HISTORIC JESUS*

Simkhovitch's *Towards the Understanding of Jesus* and Conrad Noel's *Life of Jesus* seek to portray Jesus against the historical — and especially the political — background of the times in which He lived. The first goes a long way to fulfil the expectations aroused by its modest title: Dr. Simkhovitch has indeed made a very substantial contribution towards the historical understanding of Jesus.

* *Towards the Understanding of Jesus.* By Vladimir Simkhovitch. (New edition. Macmillan. 1937. 6/-.)

The Life of Jesus. By Conrad Noel. (J. M. Dent & Sons. 1937. 12/6.)

Fr. Noel has been more ambitious, and although there is much of interest in his most readable book, he must be pronounced to have been considerably less successful. Time and again he is arresting and suggestive, but it must be doubted whether he is sufficiently equipped with the scholarship or the balanced outlook necessary for success where so many great names have failed.

'Personalities who are remembered, whom written records of human existence cannot overlook,' writes Dr. Simkhovitch, 'are personalities whose individual lives greatly affected many lives'; and 'the more limited is our knowledge of the one, the more important is the light that may be shed by the many.' Accordingly he starts by summarising the chief characteristics of the Jews to whom Jesus preached. And the key to these he finds in the sack of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, when over a million perished. This war of the zealots against Rome can be said to have begun at latest with the revolt of Judas the Gaulonite against the census of Quirinius in A.D. 6—just when Jesus would be starting to take an interest in public affairs. Passages from Josephus make clear that these rebels were not mere bandits, but political and religious devotees who sometimes preferred death to submission, and whose religion was so bound up with their patriotism that they made a religious issue out of a political question like Roman taxation and of the Hellenistic innovations of Herod the Great. It was in this atmosphere of resistance to foreign imperialists and Hellenistic culture that Messianic prophecy flourished.

> 'The old law laid out all the paths of conduct for its people. It never undertook, however, to regulate the ways of God . . . Here was a free region for mystic, religious and political speculation . . . There was now room for deeply religious heterodoxy, but orthodoxy itself became much intensified; and the tension bordered upon hysteria, as is indicated in the eschatological literature of the time and by the prevalence of nervous maladies . . . in the days of Christ's ministry.
>
> 'This great nervous strain was part of the crisis. It is precisely such a crisis that leads the many to the border of hysteria . . . and the few to the most extraordinary social, intellectual, and moral achievements . . . All human activities, all elements of friction are increased for good and for evil; and the scale must be larger for the outstanding personalities who are to marshal the enlarged forces of life' (pp. 29-31).

This atmosphere of tension is revealed in the Messianic prophecies in *II Esdras*, the *Assumption of Moses* and the *Psalms of Solomon*. God was expected to 'save the Jews from their enemies, and from the bonds of all that hate them,' to 'redeem his people, and raise up a horn of salvation for them in the house of his servant David,' and 'to punish the Gentiles and destroy all their idols' (*Assumption of Moses* x, 7).

In such an atmosphere did Jesus grow up. Texts from the Gospels (*e.g.* *Mk.* xii, 17; xiii, 14-8; *Lk.* xiii, 1-3; xix, 41-44; xxiii, 28-31; and *Jn.* xi, 48, 50) are quoted which admit of no clear meaning except in the light of

this political situation. (Indeed this list could well have been lengthened—*e.g. Lk.* xii, 49-59; xiii, 6-9). And on the basis of these our author suggests that the opposition of the Pharisees to Jesus was more political than religious:

> 'The Pharisees could probably have overlooked the heresies in Christ's religious teachings, as they overlooked those of the Sadducees . . . The great and fundamental cleavage was constituted by Christ's non-resistance to Rome . . .' (p. 41).

For 'in ecstatic humility' He accepted submission to Rome: He brought the masses not a material consolation, but a spiritual: He bade them resist not evil, and love their enemies. And 'this simple call to a spiritual revival was inevitably offensive to the prevailing political sentiment': for a true prophet (p. 82) 'because of his insight into life in general and into the inevitable consequences of our momentary passionate actions . . . can never qualify as a popular leader.' Jesus had *something* in common with the popular ideals of Messiahship, namely the saving of the Jews, but they could not understand His teaching (cf. *Lk.* xviii, 34; *Mk.* viii, 15-21; *Mt.* xvi, 23; *Jn.* vi, 15), and (p. 79) 'where intellectual understanding was lacking, nothing short of a sign in heaven, an intervention by God himself, could modify their faith': indeed, despite the resurrection, the Zealots were not converted (*Acts* i, 6), and Jerusalem still had to fall.

The main perspectives in this striking picture would seem to be entirely correct. It is the greater pity that Dr. Simkhovitch, as he openly declares on page xiii, 'has not attempted to utilise critical literature.' It is true that very few even of recent Commentaries and Introductions to the N.T. give the underlying political situation (which was of such small interest to the actual evangelists, writing some thirty to seventy years afterwards) its due weight: and Dr. Simkhovitch's fresh insight has perceived some important implications to which the more traditionalist critics have been blind. The present reviewer is particularly gratified to find confirmation of certain conclusions—particularly as to the extent to which their fanatical nationalism had prevented the Jews from understanding Jesus—at which he had independently arrived. But a perusal of some of the more assured results of moderate N.T. scholarship could have saved our author from taking at their face value the tendentious Gospel statements about Pilate's attitude to Jesus (p. 41) and the very doubtful assertion that it was customary to release a prisoner at the Passover feast (p. 42), and also from quoting (p. 72) 'go not into the way of the Gentiles' (which seems to be part of an ultra-Judaistic stratum preserved only in *Mt.*) as an authentic saying of Jesus. Again, the statement (on p. 41) that the Pharisees as well as the zealots were opposed to Jesus on political grounds has been rendered very doubtful by modern research: it is true that many of the Pharisees were swept up into the revolt of A.D. 66, and that later Rabbi Akiba voluntarily

proclaimed Bar Cochbar as the Messiah: but in the time of Jesus the Pharisees had adopted a quietist attitude on political questions, and even petitioned for direct Roman rule rather than the Herodian *régime*, hoping thereby for cultural and religious, but not political, autonomy. There is also a mistake in the first letter of the Greek word on p. 7 and in the last of that on p. 34. But when all is said we must be profoundly grateful for the fresh illumination which this book has shed. It may be hoped that the author may soon feel able to digest the acids of the literary critics, and then expand his material into a treatise as long as Conrad Noel's.

The latter rightly devotes much space to a critical and perhaps unduly antagonistic survey of Roman Imperialism, and to a judicious summary of the social and political influence of the Hebrew prophets. R. H. Charles is severely criticised (pp. 174-5) for preferring the other-worldly atmosphere of later Apocalyptic to the more material aspirations of the great prophets. As might be expected, the book is marked by an over-generous use of Marxist jargon. Thus Moses is the leader of a bricklayer's strike, John the Baptist appears as 'John the Leveller,' Zacharias, Simeon, etc., form 'the Redemptionist group,' 'the poor in spirit' become 'the spirited poor' (p. 337) and 'they that mourn' 'those who lament the tragedies of the present system'; the Kingdom of God is 'a divine international,' while Caiaphas, of course, is 'the prime minister' and the other high-priests are 'the cabinet'! The words 'Who made me a judge or a divider over you?' (*Lk.* xii, 14) are held to imply (p. 428) that Christ's business is 'with a world where all essential property will be held in common, and there will be found to be not only enough, but plenty for all.' It is to 'the workers' (p. 430) that the unjust steward has been generous!

No doubt Jesus was far more concerned with contemporary political questions and far less with the future of individual souls than popular 'Victorian' Christianity ever dreamed. But some of our author's points are a *reductio ad absurdum* of an otherwise good case. At the same time, this is far less so than one might have expected: with more references to more up-to-date books, the volume would be useful even to scholars, and as it is it makes most stimulating reading, and is an especially remarkable achievement in view of the author's blindness. Surely, however, it is going rather far to put W. E. Henley's lines, 'I am the Master of my Fate, I am the Captain of my Soul,' into the mouth of Ezekiel (p. 155); 'Canaanite,' as the equivalent of Zealot, in the footnote on p. 353, should be 'Canaanean'; and it is very doubtful whether the Jubilee Year (of which so much is made on pp. 80 and 351) was ever more than a pious intention. Gedaliah is mis-spelt on p. 151, and Ezra is still dated (p. 160) before Nehemiah. Otherwise, although we may find it hard to share the author's attitude to miracles or Soviet Russia (pp. 477, 541) or his view of the Tribute Money (pp. 461-465), etc., the book is generally accurate and always readable.

H. P. Kingdon.

THE EMERGING FAITH*

The writer of this book was for a time associated with the work of the Ethical Societies in London and for the last twenty-five years has been the Leader of the Chicago Ethical Society. In this volume he has given us a very frank and lucid account of what the Ethical Societies think and aim at doing. In Dr. Bridges these Societies have an attractive writer who is able by the transparent candour of his mind to convince the reader that he is one of that not too numerous company who love truth 'in the inward parts.'

In the introductory chapter the author discusses 'the Basis and Mission of the Ethical Movement.'

> 'The one condition for membership in an Ethical Society is the recognition of the validity of the distinction between right and wrong, and of the duty of choosing the right and eschewing the wrong in every decision.' 'The Ethical Movement is based on, and stands or falls by, the conviction that the difference between right and wrong is no more of our arbitrary making than that between true and false. We find this difference; we do not make it. The moral law, as Cicero said of the *ius naturae,* is not a law that we have made, but one in accordance with which we are made. It is one of those everlasting realities which "in the highest heaven had their birth; neither did the race of mortal men beget them, nor shall oblivion ever put them to sleep."'

This fact of 'moral objectivity' is, we are told, the one common conviction among the members of the Ethical Societies: so that no person who did not accept it could possibly wish to join such a fellowship. Complete liberty, it seems, is allowed, however, on this basis to each person to reach his own views as to what is thereby implied. Thus it happens that in all these Ethical Societies will be found persons who call themselves theists, atheists, agnostics, materialists, idealists, and neo-realists. That there should be room in such Societies for those who disagree on questions of epistemology will not surprise the Christian theist; for such disagreements exist, and probably always have existed, among the thinkers of the Church. The real question is the issue raised by the disagreements on the Being and Nature of God. Dr. Bridges goes on, in subsequent chapters, to discuss the kind of theological question put to leaders and teachers in the Ethical Societies—'Do you believe in God?' 'Do you believe in Immortality?' 'Do you believe in the Devil?' and so on. His answers to these questions—he is sufficiently consistent to declare—are 'purely personal,' and neither commit the Ethical Societies as a whole nor any single member of them. Thus he tells us that he refrains in general from using the word 'God' because intellectual honesty forbids him using a term which is susceptible of varied

* *The Emerging Faith.* By Horace J. Bridges, D.Litt. (Watts & Co. 1937. 2/6 net.)

and various connotations. 'I am quite clear that I do *not* believe in such a God as people usually have in mind when they ask the question.' Yet he goes on to speak of 'the Ultimate Spiritual Reality,' and is willing to ascribe the term 'super-personal' to this Reality, quoting with approval Herbert Spenser's familiar discussion in *First Principles*. On the other hand, he repudiates with somewhat of prophetic fervour the type of 'atheism' proclaimed in Bertrand Russell's *A Free Man's Worship*. Such atheists—or, to call them by their modern name, 'humanists'—refuse to be bothered with the 'strange mystery' of mind and conscience.

> 'Strange indeed would the mystery be if absolutely blind, sub-mental, sub-human, forces by their unplanned and uncontrolled interaction had cast up those things that we know as mind, consciousness, and conscience; if Lord Russell were right in regarding these as the "accidental" products of the collisions of an aggregate of atoms, no one of which, nor all of them together, contained any element, or even any prophetic rudiment, of these supreme realities of our human nature, which nevertheless they were collectively to produce! What dogma of traditional theology is more arbitrary, what legend in any hagiology of the Dark Ages is more incredible, or a greater affront to common-sense, than this?'

The author can probably be best described as an 'ethical mystic.' He writes with clarity, directness and candour, qualities which need to be much more conspicious in avowedly Christian writings than they have been in the past. But, as far as the Ethical Societies themselves are concerned, certain issues remain over after these attractive essays have been read. Can Ethics remain in splendid isolation from a theistic world-view? It is well to have what Dr. Bridges calls the 'inherent authority' of ethics so unhesitatingly proclaimed. But this 'inherent authority' is surely not the same as 'independence,' in spite of our author's equation of these two. He himself cannot, it is clear, keep 'independent' his ethical insight and his belief in Ultimate Spiritual Reality which may be designated 'super-personal.' So neither, presumably, can his friends in the Ethical Societies who repudiate such a belief, regard their ethical views as 'independent' of whatever world-view they hold. The integration of thought and ethical endeavour is the task of every developed personality; and it cannot be renounced by any 'Society,' whether an Ethical Society or the 'Society' which calls itself the Christian Church. Dr. Bridges would probably declare that such integration is a goal towards which we labour. Nevertheless, even to labour towards it presupposes a *faith*—the faith that it is there to be reached. And is there any more truly 'rational' and 'ethical' faith than that for which Christian Theism at its best stands? At least, the relation of faith and ethics can never be a matter of indifference to thinking and moral man. The labour of thought may impoverish or enrich ethics, as theology may compromise or establish religion.

C. J. WRIGHT.

PSYCHOANALYSIS MADE CHRISTIAN*

Psychology is a science; it is also an art. In both aspects it is an important study for parsons. As the science of the human mind it throws light on religion, on man's need for God; as an art it gives guidance for the cure of sick souls.

Mrs. Stuart's book, *The Achievement of Personality,* is of value in both respects, and well deserves the praise given it by Professor Grensted in a Foreword. Her subject is a wide one, and urgent to-day. The conditions of modern life make it hard for men and women to become fully developed characters. (See J. A. Thompson's *What is Man?*) Mrs. Stuart quotes Jung to show how often they fail: 'modern man has become merely neurotic.'

What is to be done about it? After some good opening chapters on character building in general, Mrs. Stuart gives an excellent short description of the theories and work of the three best-known modern physicians of the soul, the psycho-analysts, Freud, Adler and Jung. Each rightly emphasises a fundamental human need, Freud the need of love, Adler the need of significance and Jung the need of security; and each is more or less one-sided, over-emphasising one need and failing to recognise that all three are fundamental and are related to each other.

Freud, Adler and Jung all find the same symptoms in their patients. The sick soul has found the battle of life too hard for it, the outside world too harsh. It has therefore given up the struggle, turning in upon itself, and constructing a dream world, where it imagines itself to be all that the real world has denied it. So in every lunatic asylum there are patients who believe themselves kings and queens. They have retired from the real world, into an imaginary one where their needs for love, significance and security are satisfied.

If the patient is to be cured he must be persuaded to come out of his dream world and face the problems of real life. But how is this to be done? Freud's method is to show the patient what has driven him into fantasy, what is the difficulty he is afraid to face. But Freud confesses this does not always effect a cure. His diagnosis is correct. He shows the patient truly what he is funking, and yet this does not always give him the courage to face it. The operation is successful, but the patient dies under the anaesthetic.

Why? Mrs. Stuart gives us the reason, which is not far away. Psychoanalysis tends to think too much of the patient and too little of the real world which he must be persuaded to re-enter, if he is to be cured. It is something to show him the problem which is making him flee into mania, but before he can recover, he needs to receive courage to face it. The patient requires a friend to satisfy his needs of love, significance and security, whose lack has driven him to fantasy. But the practising psychologist who is a

* *The Achievement of Personality.* By Grace Stuart, M.A., B.Litt. (S.C.M. 1938. 5/-.)

professional man is likely to hesitate to give this friendship. Here Mrs. Stuart shows how the amateur, the Christian pastor, may be more successful, precisely because he is not afraid to be a friend, because he knows it may be his duty to be one. Yet the amateur assumes a great responsibility and runs great risks. No-one should practise psycho-analysis who is not very sane and who has not himself been analysed. Fools are always rushing in where angels fear to tread. Psycho-analysis has a fatal fascination for the neurotic.

In her concluding chapters Mrs. Stuart considers more in detail what psychologists have too often neglected, the real world to which the patient must be brought back. The soul is sick because its fundamental needs have been denied. Human love can do much to satisfy them, and so can religion, faith in God's love and care. Freud is a determinist and cannot use religion for the cure of his patients. Jung is an agnostic, but frankly says that those psychologists who have faith, or can persuade their patients to believe are the most successful and have the largest practices. On the whole, English and American psychologists are more able to harmonize their science with religion, for instance Dr. William Brown.

Man needs to feel that the world is friendly, that on the whole it will satisfy and not deny his just claims. He needs to feel at home in the world and that life is worth living. A modern faith can give him these convictions, faith that God is loving and good, the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Mrs. Stuart's book ends with the demonstration of man's need of God. This does not prove God's existence, but it confirms faith, which is based on the broader foundation of the nature of the world as a whole. The confirmation is valuable, for if this is a rational universe, then it cannot entirely deny man's fundamental needs. Mrs. Stuart has written an excellent book, of great practical usefulness. A bad misprint should be corrected on page 57, line 13, where ' not ' should be struck out.

J. K. Nettlefold.

DAVID HUME*

This book represents a ' thesis approved for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the University of London.' It professes to be a critical examination of the epistemology of the great philosopher-sceptic of Scotland, in whom the doubt raised by Descartes concerning the possibility of knowledge reached its culmination and, one might justly say, its *reductio ad absurdum*. Mrs. Maund commences with a careful discussion of the precise meaning of epistemology. She inclines to the view of Dawes Hicks and Pringle-Pattison, that, as distinguished from psychology, epistemology is ' concerned with the knower as related to the known, and not with the knower as knowing,' and, as ' distinguished from ontology, which investigates what is known,' it is ' concerned with the known in relation to the

* *Hume's Theory of Knowledge.* By Constance Maund. (Macmillan. 1937. 12/6.)

knower or the knowing, and not with the nature of something independent of any knower' (p. 7). As thus defined, its range may seem very indeterminate. To investigate the relation of knowing to the things known necessarily involves considerable inquiry into both mind and things, in fact into the constitution of reality as a whole.

The problem as presented to Hume by Locke and Berkeley was mainly that of the nature and existence of the material world apprehended through the senses. The natural assumption, that when we open our eyes our consciousness embraces the surrounding objects in a direct and spatial manner, appears untenable for various reasons. As Hume pointed out, a tree at a distance looks smaller than when we are close to it, but is supposed to remain of the same size. Moreover, we are taught by physicists that our vision of the tree is caused or conditioned by very rapid and minute vibrations of what is vaguely called ether—namely, by light—impinging on our eyes. Evidently, then, our vision of the tree is not identical with the tree. This leads to the general question how we can infer from the contents of consciousness to the existence of things outside our consciousness. Berkeley argued that we have no reason for believing that things exist at all except as objects of consciousness; *esse* is *percipi*. Consequently the only existences are minds and their conscious states. This he put forward as a conclusive refutation of atheism. There must be a Universal Mind who causes the sequences and concomitances of sensations in conscious beings according to plans of His own.

Hume disputed this, carrying the scepticism further. He contended that, so far at least as can be known, only conscious states exist, there being no evidence for the existence of minds otherwise than as streams of conscious states, that is, of selves as the subjects of consciousness; nor again, of causes, seeing that we never perceive causes as such. The idea of causation he reduced to the association of ideas: when sensations of one kind have been frequently followed by sensations of another, the re-occurrence of one of the former is followed by a faint replica of one of the latter, which he called an image, and this he equated with an expectation of the corresponding sensation. Hume apparently shrank from the final absurdity in which this line of scepticism evanesces, that his own stream of consciousness was, so far as he had any ground for supposing, the only one—solipsism; except that there would be no *ipse* to be *solus*.

Hume imposed on philosophers the task of re-examining the elementary data of human experience. More careful introspection seems to reveal that —normally, at least—our consciousness does not consist merely of inert states of ourselves, so-called sensations and images. Sensations are, doubtless, the most obtrusive elements of consciouness, but they are accompanied by awareness of realities which vouch for their own independence, for a self-existence which implies more self-existence with which we are not in immediate contact. Of recent years there has been a reaction, not only from absolute scepticism, but also from the one-sided idealism of the Kantians

and Hegelians. The New Realists have been exploring ways to a rehabilitation of common-sense materialism as a component of a comprehensively spiritual interpretation of the Universe.

Meanwhile we may welcome Mrs. Maund's essay as a critical appreciation of the thought of the master sceptic. She endeavours to appraise the subtilty of his arguments even when they are obscured by occasional looseness and vagueness in terminology. Even if, as she remarks, the book will be hardly 'intelligible to anyone who has not already read Hume's own works' (p. v), it should prove of great value to those who are familiar with them.

F. A. M. SPENCER.

CAUSATION, HUMAN AND DIVINE*

Dr. Davidson has the undoubted advantage—almost a necessity to-day—of being able to speak as a scientist, and also (though secondarily, decidedly so) as a philosopher. The problem with which he deals is whether the Universe can be described as wholly mechanical, for which purpose he examines the views of a number of recent writers—Eddington, Jeans, Levy, Dingle, Joad. This is the primary question for anyone who would deal with the question of free-will and determinism. But is it the whole problem? If we hold that mechanism is not all, there remains the further question, In what sense is a rational chooser free? He treats with a good deal of scorn Professor S. Alexander's views on Deity, which are indeed not free from contradictions (incidentally, Dr. Davidson speaks of him as 'A. N. Alexander,' which suggests a doubt whether he is acquainted with *Space, Time and Diety* at first hand). But he might with advantage have considered Alexander's interesting definition of Free Will as 'Causation enjoyed.' Does this imply that Man is a conscious robot, or that 'causation enjoyed' is different in kind from 'causation contemplated?' That they are different in kind is the basis of any doctrine of Free Will. The type of mechanical causation is the billiard ball which is set in motion by another ball completely outside of it. But Will, though it is affected by things 'outside' in the sense of circumstances over which it has no control, is determined by an inner necessity, more akin to the necessity of logic than to the necessity of mechanics. Whether ethics should regard as its ideal the completely rational being, whose conduct can be predicted because both he and his fellows are invariably right, is doubtful. In any case we should not consider it derogatory to our being to be thus determined, whereas we should so consider it if our conduct were determined like that of a billiard ball. But it may be that Bergson's view, again dismissed cursorily and contemptuously by Dr. Davidson, is nearer the truth, that the mind is

* *Free Will or Determinism.* By M. Davidson, D.Sc., F.R.A.S. (C. A. Watts and Co. 10/6 net.)

Divine Causation. By W. J. Beale, M.A., B.D., D.Phil. (Macmillan. 7/6 net.)

essentially creative, and that creation cannot be predicted. Probably the activity of the artist's mind is more relevant to the question than that of the logician, and we shall make more progress with the problem when we have thrown more light on the nature of artistic creation.

Dr. Davidson thinks that the analysis of will in terms of physico-chemical forces has not been successfully accomplished, but that *it may be*. But even if it were, or appeared to have been, so analysed, there remains the question, *what are* physico-chemical forces? For the ultimate question is metaphysical. If mind is—I will not say the sole existence—but primary, and matter secondary, then no mechanical process can be the final explanation of human conduct.

Dr. Beale deals with another aspect of causation. Does the will or providence of God act directly or through intermediaries? He treats this from the point of view of the Biblical scholar or the philosopher, and his examination of intermediary agencies in Hebrew lore is of great value. Animism, totemism, magic, divination, and the belief in angels are all discussed from this point of view. Perhaps the most enlightening section is that which deals with the 'Malach of Jahveh,' the divine messenger, which, in its original conception, is Jahveh in human form.

In dealing with the New Testament the author is perhaps less happy. He has by this time come so firmly to the conclusion that there are no intermediary agents between God and man, that he is at pains to eliminate the reference to angels from the sayings of Jesus, a procedure which, like all such *a priori* methods, results in his doing violence to the records. For example, he argues that the Sadducees *did* believe in angels and that Jesus did not. In the argument with them about the Resurrection 'he was simply adopting their beliefs (not his own) in order to reveal their inconsistency and to stimulate thought.' Could anyone, who had not a theory to make good, possibly arrive at such a paradox from a candid survey of the evidence?

Moreover, does a belief in angels necessarily imply an absentee God? The employment of beings of a higher spiritual order (if there were good evidence of their existence and activity) would not cut off humanity from direct communication with the Deity, any more than a black man is so cut off because his religion is taught him by a white missionary.

To the philosophical question of Immanence or Transcendence, Dr. Beale does not devote sufficient space. So difficult a problem needs longer consideration. His conclusion is that Transcendence and Immanence imply one another. The analogy of the artist and his work, on which he relies mainly for his conception of immanence, is illuminating and perhaps the clearest analogy which we can reach. At least it saves us from a conception of divine Immanence which is merely the world regarded from a different point of view.

GUY KENDALL.

CHRISTIAN PROPAGANDA*

Both of these books are ortatory in style, Dr. Fosdick's being twenty-five sermons preached in New York, Canon Barry's the substance of pulpit utterances in The Abbey and in St. John's, Smith Square, refashioned as the first publication of The Religious Book Club. Dr. Fosdick has to do specifically with Christian conduct, Canon Barry with Christian thought. But, since Christian conduct and thought are inseparable, both writers cover much common ground and deal with identical problems confronting the Church at this time—problems new in form rather than in fact. These two books—Canon Barry's certainly—could be classified as Christian propaganda. That is, they are relevant literature, defining the Christian attitude to the war-cries of to-day. Dr. Fosdick points out that whereas there was a time when

> 'it was as much as a man could do to get a hearing for the social gospel, now in some quarters it is as much as a man can do to get a hearing for the kind of personal dealing that the Master practised.'

Canon Barry writes:

> 'The "heresies" of the twentieth century are economic, moral, and political, rather than speculative and metaphysical.'

Both these statements actually express the same difficulty which Christianity is facing in the modern world. Whereas, in times past, men were engrossed with the business of personal salvation and so their heresies came from unbalanced speculation about man's spiritual nature, men in these days are obsessed with economic and social salvation and need to be convinced of the futility of explaining man in terms of nothing more than man. For that reason, both writers throughout emphasize the essential basis of the Christian life—prayer and worship. The Christian's clearest task is to be instant in prayer. For the initiative in Christian action is with God. So, says Canon Barry,

> 'we move from man's despair to God's promise, from man's bankruptcy to God's initiative. This means that the first need of the Churches, if they would Christianize the world for God, is to help revive in their rank and file membership the capacity for vital prayer and worship.'

Dr. Fosdick writes,

> 'Millions of us in the Christian Churches are failures . . . because, often unconsciously, we have dropped out of our experience the methods by which spiritual life is nurtured.'

They both, in fact, re-echo the first and unanimous finding of the Oxford Conference last July, that the primary requisite of all the Churches is an act of repentance and faith.

Canon Barry and Dr. Fosdick express what the majority of modern Christians more inarticulately feel. But, in comparing these books, the reader cannot help concluding that Dr. Fosdick has the advantage of a

* *What has Chistianity to Say?* By F. R. Barry. (S.C.M. Press. 5/-. 1937.)
Successful Christian Living. By H. E. Fosdick. (S.C.M. Press. 6/-. 1937.)

more clear-cut, direct method. Canon Barry writes in his Preface that his book is

> 'an attempt to meet the point of view of the ordinary thoughtful Briton who believes in his heart that Christianity holds the solution for the world's need, but is uncertain what it has to say.'

In view of that statement, it is perhaps regrettable that there are certain passages in his book which reveal rather than remove the uncertainty of Christian thought. In considering the problem of pacifism, for instance, he mentions the argument that by refusing to take part in a war of sanctions, you are weakening your country in playing that part of constructive peacemaker which as a Christian you are always urging upon it. 'I do not wholly accept that argument,' he writes. He shows its logical conclusions, and agrees that it provides an appalling dilemma; then, surprisingly, he adds, 'I do not propose to attempt to resolve it now.' Surely, it would have been better in a book with such a title not to have raised the problem than not to have attempted its solution.

Again, when on p. 167 he actually approaches the point of view of average thoughtful Britons, which undoubtedly is that 'they cannot see how the Christian principles can be applied in the world as it now is,' he goes on:

> 'But a standard that is permanently inapplicable seems to be merely of academic interest. Personally, I do not endorse that sentence. I believe that an impracticable standard is needed to save a "workable" morality from the fatty degeneration of complacency.'

It is extremely doubtful whether 'the average thoughtful Briton' will appreciate that sentence in close conjunction with the one succeeding it.

> 'But anyone can see that on the face of it there seems small use in offering men a standard which can never be applied to anything.'

There seems a reluctance here to resolve the clear opposition of two views. The resolution may be clear in the writer's mind, but it is difficult for the reader not to feel that Christianity is here saying little that is intelligibly relevant. What he would welcome would be greater development in Canon Barry's distinction between a standard and a rule. The main difficulty of the Christian life in a modern environment is to achieve a rule of conduct which most nearly approximates to the Christian standard, supposing the Christian to have decided that this latter is impracticable. The Christian who is still striving towards that difficult and necessarily individual achievement will probably find the cut-and-dried directness of Dr. Fosdick's sermons of more help.

But perhaps that is because Canon Barry does not really address 'the average thoughtful Briton.' On p. 13 he writes:

> 'Unless the Church succeeds in recapturing the habitual thinking of educated people, most of its other activities are wasted.'

If this statement is true, it must prove profoundly discouraging to those large numbers of clergy who have chosen to work among the people who

are not educated up to the standard implied in Canon Barry's words and in the general style of his book. It would appear that he limits the number of 'average thoughtful Britons' to a matter of thousands. I would suggest that, by using that phrase, he addressed himself to hundreds of thousands.

If the Religious Book Club is to succeed in its admirable object, it must provide literature which does not require a university-educated mind to read it. For it should be remembered that the publishers of non-Christian or anti-Christian propaganda have not made that mistake. And we need, more than ever at this time, to be wiser than the children of this world.

JOSEPH MCCULLOCH.

NOT THE LAST OF THE MOHICANS*

If anyone takes these as his first chapters in religious philosophy, it is sincerely to be hoped that he will not take them as his last. Nor, in fairness, would this appear to be the author's intention. He has given us a Cook's tour through the philosophy and psychology of religion in 300 pages; frankly, a 'cram' book. There may be times when we none of us have a mind above such a book; for instance in last minute revisions before examinations, when we want to organize and remind ourselves of the reading we have done (or not done). But a book of this kind is in general too sketchy to be of much real value. It may, however, serve to introduce the English reader to some interesting American work which may be unfamiliar to him —though in a general book on the philosophy of religion, the space given to a few contemporary Americans, however distinguished, is surely disproportionate compared with the 'hasty glance' at the great men of the past. Moreover, among contemporaries, thinkers such as Clement Webb, John Oman and Reinhold Niebuhr are ignored; nor is any contemporary Continental theologian or philosopher (except Bergson) mentioned.

The style of the book is chatty; although (with Royce) we 'can't quite sign on the Absolute's dotted line,' we gather that there is much to be said for having 'a first-class God,' but it may be as well to present him as 'a rugged though lovable companion.' References to our Lord are apt to be slightly patronising; we gather he was a 'simple Galilean,' whose ideas were quite advanced for his time.

Why do these semi-pyschological and philosophical jargons of our modern days seem so to trivialize religion? No doubt it is important

> 'to effect . . . a vital adjustment to w(W)hatever is reacted to or regarded implicitly or explicitly as worthy of serious and ulterior concern'

(the author's general definition of being religious); and no doubt this tells us something. But shall we recapture a deep religion until we can learn to write about it in language which reflects more adequately something of the austerity and delicacy of the Divine Nature which it seeks to apprehend?

DOROTHY M. EMMET.

* *First Chapters in Religious Philosophy.* By Vergilius Ferm. (Putnam. pp. xii + 319. Price 10/6 net.)

BEDFORD'S DREAMER *

This most interesting book tells the story of Bunyan's life from the sociological standpoint; that is to say, it relates his work, and the religious movement out of which it sprang, to the social forces which brought both into being. His autobiography, *Grace Abounding,* needs translating out of the idiom in which it is written. The personal and social roots of the poor tinker's torments were inevitably concealed from him (as is the case still with most of us), and had he been able to relate them to their underlying causes, they would simply have disappeared.

Although men in the seventeenth century were aware of the social and economic stresses which surrounded and distracted them, they could not analyse their causes, but stated them, naturally, in religious terms. The situation was that though the productive mechanism had developed, class divisions were becoming deeper and strife more bitter. The more man progressed, the more he seemed to be making a hell of his world. Hence the acute sense of discord in the souls of men like Bunyan.

Bunyan did not himself come of the class that benefitted from the Civil War, though he spent three years in the New Army. On the contrary, he belonged to the class which had been dispossessed of its holdings by the chicanery and semi-legal trickery of the new landowning and trading class which, allied with the Crown in Henry VII's time, had turned against it in the time of Charles I. But the Civil War stimulated the dispossessed peasant to hope for things which his betters took good care he should not have. Men like the 'Levellers,' followers of prophets like Lilburne, were seeking to carry things far beyond the point that could be tolerated by the victorious 'bourgeoisie,' who had not beaten Charles in order to hand over the fruits of victory to the *canaille*. The trouble is that every bourgeois movement towards 'liberty' arouses the hopes of the depressed classes, and so has to be curtailed and betrayed. Thus now a rift displayed itself in protestantism (which had been the stimulus behind the rise of the new middle class). The economically satisfied wished to call a halt, while those whose hands and bellies were empty wished to advance further. Such was the origin of the split in protestantism between Anglicanism and Presbyterianism on the one hand, and Independency on the other. It was now only in the last of these three that protestantism was genuinely alive.

Bunyan will not be understood unless it is realised that his thought is the product of post Civil War disillusionment:

> 'He had taken part in the Civil War; but he had also seen the deeper democratic aspirations of the Levellers proved as apparently quite futile. Returned to Elstow, he was left to his own devices, thrown back into himself, in a world where the impulse of unity had seemed to frustrate itself and where the petty-bourgeois sanctification of success

* *John Bunyan.* By Jack Lindsay. (Methuen. 10/6.)

was the predominant attitude. He was forced back on his nightmare with heated, tormented brain.'

But against this background the poor tinker of Bedford comes alive, and the story of his life takes on a startling degree of reality. In some respects, even, it reads as a *contemporary* life. For in our own days too there is the same betrayal, the same revival of persecution and feudalist methods. To-day, as in Bunyan's time, those who have are ready to make a compact with all they once hated and undermined, if by any means they can keep those who have not from taking a share of the good things of this world.

J. C. HARDWICK.

IN MEMORIAM—ROBERT BREN

Robert Bren, whose death took place at Edgbaston on April 26th, in his eighty-ninth year, was formerly Vicar of Immanuel, Birmingham, and had been a member of the Modern Churchmen's Union since 1918. He was the elder son of the late Robert Bren, of Reading, a C.M.S. missionary.

He graduated at Worcester College, Oxford, in 1873, and was ordained in the same year by the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol. After serving three curacies he was appointed Vicar of Immanuel, Broad Street, in 1885.

There Mr. Bren laboured for thirty-eight years. After the death of his wife in October, 1922, he resigned his living, but was ever ready to help harassed or sick incumbents by preaching for them. He was an excellent parish priest of the old-fashioned type. Mrs. Bren loyally assisted him, and it was their delight to entertain the girl members of her Bible and Sunday-school classes at their house in Aberdovey, overlooking the sea.

I met Mr. Bren in 1914, and can well remember his quiet, unassuming, but very pointed and thoughtful sermons.

He was deeply read in philosophy, being, I believe, a Berkelian. He had been for many years a member of a philosophical association which published—at least I found it so—an awe-inspiring quarterly called *Mind*.

A. M. COLEMAN.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor of *The Modern Churchman*

A MODERNIST VENTURE.

SIR, A SUPPLEMENTARY LECTIONARY OF CHRISTIAN PROSE.

Several years ago the suggestion was made at one of the Conferences of the Modern Churchmen's Union by Dr. Raven, that a supplementary lectionary of post Biblical Christian prose, including biographical passages, would be of great value. Dr. Raven and several other members, including the Bishop of St. Edmundsbury and Ipswich, suggested to me that I should try my hand at producing one, and I have since spent considerable time and taken much trouble over the work, and have received cordial support from members of the Union, many of whom have, at my request, sent various suggestions of favourite passages which they thought should be included.

Last September I made an interim report to the Modern Churchmen's Conference at Girton on the progress of the work, and mentioned that the draft calendar had been favourably received by those in authority for unofficial use on certain occasions, in order that it might be tried out experimentally.

I have since then set to work to copy out the passages, and in this I have been helped by students of Westcott House.

When the copying was completed I took advice, and eventually sent the MS. to Messrs. Longmans Green and Co. Their report is now to hand, and they state that they would like to publish the book, on which they have had a very favourable report, but that owing to its size (360 pages demy 8vo), and also to the necessity for keeping its price at 10/6, they are obliged to ask for a subsidy of £100, and also for the amount of the fees which will have to be paid for permission to reproduce extracts from more recent books.

I am not myself in a position to find any capital for this purpose, and the initial production has already cost me a certain amount of money. I am therefore venturing to ask the Council and members of the Modern Churchmen's Union if they can be kind enough to aid this work with a sum of £100 and the payment of the fees (which will approximately amount to about another £50, or perhaps a little more).

As Messrs. Longmans are producing this book at the lowest possible price, they state that they cannot pay any royalties on the first 350 copies. If, however, they sell more than 350, they suggest paying me a small royalty on the subsequent sales, in order to recompense me for the considerable amount of time and trouble which I have spent on this book for several years past, and for the expenditure which I have incurred in connexion with it.

I would add that in compiling the book I have sought to make it a really comprehensive selection of passages for reading aloud, arranged according to the church seasons (averaging two for each Sunday and Holy Day), and including a number of short tales and biographical sketches, and typical extracts from the utterances of great Christians of every age since that of the Apostles, providing for the needs of villagers as well as of more highly educated folk. My range has been from Aphraates to Spurgeon and from St. Bernard and St. Francis to Martineau, Jowett, and Bishop Gore! I have managed to include biographies of Carlo Borromeo and Charles Simeon, of Josephine Butler and Charles Russell, some of the finest passages from the great mystics, portions of village sermons by F. J. A. Hort and R. W. Church, and appropriate utterances from Erasmus and Luther, from George Fox and R. L. Stevenson, from Charles Darwin and Sir John Seeley, from Hooker, Ruskin, Carlyle and Clutton Brock, from John Bunyan, John Wesley, and the Sadhu Sundar Singh. I have ransacked the Anglo-Saxon Homilies, and the writings of Aquinas, William Law, and John Henry Newman; and I have tried to give a few stories of the great Victorian pioneer missionaries. Whether these efforts have been successful, the public must judge for themselves.

I have been much impressed since I began by the wide consensus of opinion which I have discovered that such a work is earnestly to be desired. Both Evangelicals and Anglo-Catholics have welcomed its compilation, and have spoken to me about the urgent need for it, and my correspondents have been numerous.

I feel safe, therefore, safer by far than I should be if I were dependent entirely upon my own individual opinion and efforts, in appealing to my

friends and fellow-members of the Union to give this venture their financial support.

A. C. BOUQUET.

Gilling House,
Madingley Road, Cambridge.

[We venture to commend this undertaking to the hearty support of our fellow-modernists. It is a modernist effort of real pith and merit and not to support it is to miss a great opportunity.—ED., *M.C.*]

SIR,

AN OFFICIAL ESTIMATE OF VON HÜGEL.

May I, as one of the few survivors among Fr. Tyrrell's real friends, protest against the absurdity—repeated in the review of Father Nédoncelle's study of Baron von Hügel—that von Hügel *introduced* Tyrrell to the scriptural and theological problems of the day—and ye gods—to such writers as Newman, Blondel and Loisy. The Baron had no use for Newman, so he would hardly introduce anyone to him. The idea is fast growing that Tyrrell, till he met the Baron, was an innocent, ignorant, devout young Jesuit, perfectly happy administering pious pap to Jesuit lay-brothers and such like. People forget that Tyrrell had a line of thought and study of his own—not the Baron's, but a far more dangerous one. He told me himself, at the time of his excommunication, that he was exactly where he always knew he would be ten or twelve years before—long before he knew the Baron. The Baron only made him read German authors, and there is nothing said by Germans that is not better said by French and English (Anglican) writers. 'Loisy's book is out' he wrote to me, 'and it leaves the foremost Germans panting in the rear.'

Tyrrell spent his life as a Jesuit in answering difficulties—everyone in difficulties in our church was sent to Tyrrell. Vaughan sent Mivart to him. So how could he have been ignorant of difficulties. And because in his later years he spoke out (he thought it was time someone did so) that did not mean that he was merely outrunning the Baron.

No. Tyrrell is forgiven now, because he has been utterly discredited. His worst wounds have been the work of friends so-called. The Baron is lauded to the skies because he submitted—his change of tone so disgusted me that I refused to go to his house. I could not bear it. Von Hügel always managed to keep in with the authorities publicly (no one denounced them more emphatically in private).

Tyrrell defied our modern Sanhedrin. He did but follow a great example.

K. M. CLUTTON.

SIR,

THE VIRGIN BIRTH.

In reply to Mr. Warner, I should say that if God had seen fit to bring about the incarnation of His Son by a virgin surely He could have chosen for this purpose a maiden who was not already affianced to a man, and so would have spared both of them the unnecessary pain to which the Evangelist himself alludes in I.19. And again, if God by the seventh commandment upheld the sacredness of marriage, He could never have so acted as to cast any slight upon it.

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[We regret being compelled to hold over some letters until the June issue. —ED., *M.C.*]